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THE TALES AND POEMS  
OF  
EDGAR ALLAN POE

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

BY

JOHN H. INGRAM

And Twenty Original Etchings, Five Photogravures  
and a New Etched Portrait

IN SIX VOLUMES

VOL. VI

*LIFE AND POEMS*



GEORGE BARRIE, PUBLISHER



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EDGAR ALLAN POE



## EDGAR ALLAN POE.

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“ Das Schlimmste weisz die Welt von mir, und ich kann sagen, ‘  
ich bin besser als mein Ruf!’ ”

Next to the *Newgate Calendar*, averred Dr. Johnson, the biography of authors is the most sickening chapter in the History of Man. The history of few men would appear to more thoroughly corroborate the learned lexicographer's dictum, whether regarded from a mental or personal aspect, than that of Edgar Poe. From birth to burial the hapless poet's career is an illustration of his own lines in “The Raven”: he it was,—

“ Whom unmerciful Disaster  
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—  
Till the dirges of his Hope the melancholy burden bore  
Of ‘Never—nevermore.’ ”

Edgar Allan Poe was the inheritor of trouble: his misfortunes have been deemed, and justly, to have preceded his birth. His father, David, was a scion of an Irish family holding a foremost position amongst the citizens of Baltimore. Instead of fulfilling his parents' wish that he should qualify for the bar, young Poe forsook his legal studies and became an actor. It is doubtful whether Love or Thespis induced the youth to take this rash step; one thing only being certain, that on the stage he beheld a beautiful young English girl and

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married her. Elizabeth Arnold, whom the young American took for his wife, is believed to have descended from a family of even higher rank than her husband's and, what is of more importance, possessed no slight talent both as singer and actor. Her famous son speaks of her as "a woman who, although well born, hesitated not to consecrate to the drama her brief career of genius and beauty," whilst many contemporary records allude to her beauty, and her musical and dramatic powers.

In those days, however, an actor's life in the United States was one of ceaseless wandering from town to town. The company to which the Poes were attached happened to be in Boston during January, 1809, and in that city, on the nineteenth of the month, their second son, Edgar, was born. In 1811, the little family was staying in Richmond, Virginia, and there in the early part of the year, David Poe is said to have died of consumption, his death preceding by a few months the birth of his third child and, after a short interval, the decease of his wife.

The three orphans, William Henry Leonard, Edgar, and Rosalie, were adopted by various individuals, Edgar, already distinguished by his beauty, falling to the share of a Mr. John Allan, a wealthy Scotchman, residing in Richmond, who, although long married, was childless. In 1816, the Allans visited England, and took their adopted son, who now bore their surname, with them. The boy was placed at an academy at Stoke Newington, kept by the Rev. Dr. Bransby, and left there for five years. Edgar appears to have made a good impression upon his master, and was referred to by him in after years as "a quick and clever boy," and as a boy whom he liked, but who was spoilt by the extravagant amount

of pocket-money his parents, meaning the Allans, allowed him. What impression the Manor House School and its master made upon the plastic mind of the child may be found, vividly and faithfully related, in the partly autobiographical story of "William Wilson."

Those who refer to prenatal influences the funereal gloom and sombre side of Edgar Poe's character, have probably good grounds for their theory; but apart from that, and the almost chronic ill fortune which accompanied him, there is little doubt that the friendless isolation of that *lustrum* of childhood spent in a foreign land, and in such a solemn old town as was Stoke Newington, must have had an awe-inspiring if not depressing effect upon the exiled orphan. Whatever may have been the influence of the "venerable old town" and its "excessively ancient" school-house upon the boy's morbidly sensitive mind, it is certain that when he returned to Virginia, in 1821, it was with a good groundwork of knowledge.

After his return home Edgar appears to have had a somewhat lengthy vacation, during which he amused himself with the composition of verses. In 1822 he was placed in one of the best schools in Richmond, where he associated with, and was brought into competition with, the children of the first citizens of Virginia. His natural talents and his indomitable pride urged him to take a foremost position among his school-fellows, and, according to the reminiscences of many of them, both in athletic sports and class work he became an acknowledged leader. In some valuable remarks on his distinguished school-fellow, Colonel Preston relates that Poe, who reassumed his proper patronymic on entering this academy, "in the simple school athletics of those days, when a gymnasium had not been heard of, was *facile*

*princeps*. He was a swift runner, a wonderful leaper, and what was more rare, a boxer, with some slight training." Corroborative anecdotes, often bordering on the marvelous, are related by other youthful companions of the future poet, and, after making due allowance for the exaggeration of boyhood, prove that even at that early age Poe gave indications of his power and pride of being different from, and superior to, his companions.

At home, however, matters were not so rose-colored. Mr. Allan was of a wayward and tyrannical temperament, and scarcely fitted to control a lad of Edgar's haughty and stubborn disposition. The adoptive father was proud of his handsome and clever *protège*, and delighted to make an exhibition of his acquirements, but at times treated him with contumely and, there is reason to believe, twitted him with his obscure parentage and dependent position. It was whilst smarting under some such inflictions as these that he one day accompanied a school-fellow, Robert Stannard, home, and was introduced to his young friend's mother. "This lady," relates Mrs. Whitman, "on entering the room, took his hand and spoke some gentle and gracious words of welcome, which so penetrated the sensitive heart of the orphan boy as to deprive him of the power of speech, and for a time almost of consciousness itself. He returned home in a dream, with but one thought, one hope in life—to hear again the sweet and gracious words that had made the desolate world so beautiful to him, and filled his lonely heart with the oppression of a new joy." Mrs. Stannard subsequently became the confidant of his boyish troubles, and "when he was unhappy at home (which was very often the case)," relates Mrs. Clemm, "he went to her for sympathy, for consolation, and for advice."

The sad fate which seemed to overtake all that was

dear to our unfortunate hero overtook his beloved friend; she became a prey to mental alienation and, after a while died and was entombed in a neighboring cemetery. The poor boy could not bear to think of this lady lying alone and forsaken in her vaulted tomb, and for long after her decease would steal away at night to visit her sepulchre, and "when the autumnal rains fell, and the winds wailed mournfully over the graves, he lingered longest, and came away most regretfully." To the close of his life Poe's mind was tinged with the phantasies these nightly vigils created, and many of his tales and poems are permeated with the weird imaginings they gave rise to. In some juvenile verses entitled "The Pæan" he commemorated the goodness of his lost friend, and, many years subsequently, was inspired to indite the beautiful stanzas beginning, "Helen, thy beauty is to me," in memory of this "the one idolatrous and purely ideal love" of his boyhood.

Although Mrs. Helen Stannard was the ideal "lost Lenore" of Poe's verse, during the latter portion of his school-days in Richmond, he appears to have had a real *affaire de cœur* of a more ordinary character. The object of his boyish affection was a young lady residing with her father in Richmond, just opposite the Allans. Naturally the young people saw a great deal of each other; became acquainted and, almost as naturally, became fond of each other. Elmira Royster was little more than a child, whilst Edgar Poe was but a boy in years, yet boys of such precocity as he can feel and express their feelings with all the passionate intensity of manhood. After their attachment had endured for some time, all manifestations of it were suddenly put a stop to by Edgar's departure for the University of Virginia. Certainly, the youthful couple made the usual vows of

doubtful  
the beautiful  
Pæan

everlasting affection, and attempted correspondence ; but the young lady's father, having decided views of his own in the matter, intercepted the letters, and so put a stop to the engagement. It was not until a year or two later, when Elmira had become another's bride, that Edgar discovered how it was that his fervent appeals had failed to elicit any response. Many of the poet's juvenile verses appear to refer to this first love, which contributed towards deepening the romance and melancholy of his youth. Referring to Byron's love for Mary Chaworth, Poe appears to shadow forth the remembrance of his own boy-love. "It is perhaps better," is his reflection, "for the mere romance of the love passages between the two, that their intercourse was broken up in early life, and never uninterruptedly resumed in after years. Whatever of warmth, whatever of soul passion, whatever of the truer share and essentiality of romance was elicited during the youthful association, is to be attributed altogether to the poet. If *she* felt at all, it was only while the magnetism of *his* actual presence compelled her to feel," is Poe's reflection, and that even "if she responded at all, it was merely because the necromancy of *his* words of fire could not do otherwise than extort a response."

Early in February, 1826, Poe entered the University of Virginia. The establishment was new and the students somewhat unruly, but the poet, as it has been incontestably proved, held a good position in the various classes he attended and, had existing regulations in regard to degrees then been in force, would have graduated ; as it was, he obtained the highest honors a student could then attain. Again in athletics, as well as in scholastic acquirements, he was foremost among his classmates, and although many of the marvelous stories related of his feats of skill and daring must be regarded

as pure myth, enough of fact remains to prove that he was, and was indeed deemed by his comrades, superior in every way to the common run of university students.

But at the university Poe contracted the all-prevailing vice of gambling and contrived to lose somewhat heavily. The hundred pounds or so, which Mr. Allan was called upon to pay for his adopted son's "debts of honor," more than outweighed in the careful Scotchman's mind the honors which the lad had won, and, therefore, his University career was abruptly closed.

There is a somewhat misty atmosphere of romance about the next few years of Poe's life. In all probability he quarrelled with Mr. Allan about his college debts, and in his usual impetuous, self-reliant way, forsook his home. Some of his father's relatives are believed to have taken him by the hand for a time, and some unknown person assisted him to get a little volume of poems printed. The anticipated proceeds of this booklet were apparently required to defray the cost of its author's journey to Europe, whence he had resolved to proceed with the intention of offering his services to the Greeks against their Turkish oppressors. Shelley records that the Hellenes expected a deliverer from America, but Poe, if he were the looked-for leader, does not appear to have ever reached the soil of Greece; and although he doubtless revisited Europe during this interregnum in his life, his Hellenic enthusiasm, inspired chiefly by Byron's example, expended itself in a translation of the well-known "Hymn in honor of Harmodius and Aristogeiton."

Poe's return to Richmond was probably brought about by Mrs. Allan's illness, and her desire to see her adopted child once more. The poet arrived too late to receive her last farewell: she expired ere he could reach

*Doubtful*

home and was buried the day before his return. Mr. Allan does not appear to have welcomed the prodigal very warmly, but for a time there was a truce to recrimination. During his absence from Richmond, Poe had occupied his leisure by rewriting his old and by composing new poems, and in the course of the year published the result in a volume entitled *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane and Minor Poems*. The book received some little notice from one or two reviewers and then disappeared, the few copies which passed into circulation having been presentation copies.

The young poet did not stay long at his former home. General Scott and other influential friends having interested themselves on his behalf, he was enabled to obtain a nomination to the Military Academy at West Point, where he was admitted as a cadet on the first of July, 1830. He is stated to have commenced his new duties with his accustomed alacrity, but before long discovered how unsuitable the rigid military discipline, the almost total absence of recreation, and the monotonous training, were for one of his now restless and wayward disposition. Nevertheless, notwithstanding all allegations to the contrary, the records of the institution go to prove that he maintained a fair position among his brother cadets until the close of the year. By this time all his enthusiasm for military service had died away; he saw that he was not cut out for a soldier and, therefore, sought to resign his cadetship. But a resignation could not be accepted without the consent of parent or guardian and this Mr. Allan, it is averred, would not give. The wealthy Scotchman had married again soon after the death of his first wife, and having now a son of his own, did not appear desirous of being again

burdened with the maintenance of Edgar, who, as long as he remained in the Military Academy was provided by government not only with food, lodging, and clothes, but also with a monthly allowance of twenty-eight dollars.

Unable to obtain his discharge in any other way Poe determined to get dismissed: for several days he absented himself from all parades and roll calls and neglected to obey orders to attend church. Tried by court-martial for these various offences he declined to plead, was found guilty, and "dismissed the service of the United States."

Having deliberately flung away his chance of success in one profession, Poe determined to seek a livelihood in another, and in one more in accordance with his natural tastes and inclinations: he resolved to adopt literature for an occupation. In the first place, it was necessary to make some arrangement as to ways and means. He returned to Richmond in order to explain matters to Mr. Allan, but his adoptive father drove him from his presence in anger, and he had to leave his boyhood's home, and for ever, without being permitted to offer any excuse for, or explanation of, the course he had taken. Nor did a letter which he addressed to his whilom guardian elicit any response.

Exiled from home, and without any certain means of subsistence, the next two years or so of Poe's life must have been full of misery and struggle. He started on his literary career with the old expedient of a volume of verse, revising and enlarging, and issuing as a second edition of *Poems*, his little 1829 book. The cadets at West Point, to whom the work was dedicated, are said to have subscribed very freely for their old comrade's book, but even if that were so, their contributions are not likely to have reached any considerable sum, nor to have afforded the young poet any material aid.

Another mysterious gap occurs in Poe's story, and it is not until the autumn of 1833, when he is discovered as a poor *littérateur* at Baltimore, that anything positive about his deeds can be stated. A local journal having offered prizes for the best poem and the best story, Poe submitted a manuscript volume containing a poem and six stories, styling it the *Tales of the Folio Club*. The adjudicators awarded both prizes to our poet, and in selecting the story of the "MS. Found in a Bottle" for the premium, declared "the author owes it to his own reputation, as well as to the gratification of the community, to publish the entire volume," as its contents are "eminently distinguished by a wild, vigorous, and poetical imagination, a rich style, a fertile invention, and varied and curious learning."

Aided by the *éclat* this award gave him, and assisted by John P. Kennedy, the well-known author, Poe began to earn a livelihood by literature. At his friend's suggestion he sent his manuscript *Tales of the Folio Club* to the *Southern Literary Messenger*, a magazine newly started in Richmond, and in the pages of that publication they made their first appearance. "Berenice," the earliest of the series, although replete with Poesque touches, concludes with so horrible a *dénouement* that even its author's warmest admirers must deem it better unwritten. "Morella," also, which appeared in the following number, and several of Poe's later writings, deal with subjects of not only a sombre and funereal character, but with ghastly and repulsive themes. It is a singular if not an inexplicable fact, that the most original romancists of the New World have selected horrible phantasies and weird mysteries for their subjects, and have striven to analyze and describe emotions and events their predecessors in the Old World have

carefully eschewed. Poe and Hawthorne are the most remarkable creators of this bizarre class of works, and yet the other points of resemblance between the two are few. *Poe endeavors to realize the ideal, Hawthorne to idealize the real.* Hawthorne attempts to paint from nature, striving with more or less success to fling a glamor of weirdness over the commonplace, whilst Poe selects the abnormal, and would fain persuade us it is natural and probable. Hawthorne never reached the sublimity of terror attained by Poe; he was as powerless to describe the wonders of the "Maelstrom" as he was to compose "The Raven," but in detailing natural, commonplace horrors, such as the fly crawling towards the dead man's open eye, or the dragging for Zenobia's body, he is inimitable: in both the latter instances incidents not very unusual to humanity are described, and herein lies Hawthorne's strength and popularity: he is master of some human passions, and can play on the more impulsive strings of our hearts whilst Poe only sways our brain. Over the intellect Poe must ever reign supreme, but the heart will always incline more lovingly to Hawthorne. Nor must it be forgotten that if Poe sometimes wrote rubbish, even the poorest and tawdriest of his work possesses a certain degree of artistic finish and Poesque originality, whilst many of Hawthorne's less meritorious papers are simply insipid twaddle, and might have been indited by any *littérateur* of the day.

The type of tales alluded to as Poe's earliest contributions to the *Messenger* were followed by "Hans Pfaal," a story of a very different class and, indeed, the brightest example of its author's attempts at humorous writing. This voyage to the moon, the prototype of so many lunar journeys, excited no small sensation when it appeared, and carried Poe's name into many new

quarters. Mr. White, however, having engaged Poe as editor for the *Messenger*, suggested that he should try his pen at reviewing, and the poet, having chiefly the ephemeral labors of provincial mediocrities to exercise his talents upon, gave them so severe a scarification that he aroused a perfect hornet's nest. This attack on the members, or rather on the productions, of the various local "Mutual Admiration Societies," whilst it answered Mr. White's purpose of creating a demand for the *Messenger*, seriously injured its editor's prospects. Authors are as sensitive as women and quite as vindictive, and those who fell under Poe's lash neither forgot nor forgave him their castigation. Unfortunately for his comfort during life and his reputation after it, the excitement and success which attended his earliest criticisms inclined Poe but too frequently in after life to succumb to the offers of publishers to renew his analyses and crucial dissections of books and their makers: the longer he lived the higher, as well as more numerous, were the literary reputations he sought to resolve to their proper constituents, and as a natural consequence, the wider and more influential grew the circle of his antagonists. Even yet the irritation and hostility which he aroused has not quite died out, although now that most of his contemporaries have passed away and a new generation has arisen, less biased motives sway criticisms on Edgar Poe.

In December, 1835, Poe accepted the editorship of the *Literary Messenger* at a salary of about two pounds a week, and with only this pittance—and this even of an uncertain nature—he ventured upon matrimony! On the sixth of May, 1836, he married Virginia the only child of his aunt, Mrs. Clemm. His child wife—she was not yet fourteen—was a beautiful and accomplished,

girl, and in every way fitted for a poet's bride. She was a good vocalist, and under her husband's careful training became a clever musician and a fair linguist. In his impassioned prose poem of "Eleonora," the poet tells in "words that burn," how the knowledge of his love for his cousin and her reciprocation of the passion, burst upon him one evening, and how the revelation of the secret wrought a change in everything about them: how all beauteous things became more beautiful; how "brilliant flowers burst out upon the trees where no flowers had been known before;" how the hues of "the green grass deepened," and how the whole face of nature bloomed and blossomed beneath the magic spells of Love.

Under the tender care and guardianship, as it were, of the young bride's mother, the poet started housekeeping in the city of his bygone boyhood, having removed to Richmond, in order to personally superintend Mr. White's Magazine. Under the new editor's management the *Literary Messenger* became a grand success; Poe's tales and critiques gave it a wonderful reputation and an extensive circulation. Knowing how largely the increased value of the publication was due to his own exertions, the poet, who would appear to have got into pecuniary difficulties, applied to its proprietor for increased remuneration and even, it is supposed, for a partnership in the concern. Mr. White would not, or could not, come to terms, so Poe, in his usual high-handed and impetuous manner, flung up his engagement and removed with his little *ménage* to New York.

His literary labors in the northern metropolis do not appear to have been very voluminous, and consisted chiefly of seeing through the press in book form his romance of "Arthur Gordon Pym." Unable to obtain

any permanent occupation in New York, Poe and his household goods removed to Philadelphia, at that time the chief city in the United States for periodical publications. He had not been in the city of Penn long ere he obtained employment on the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the property of Mr. W. E. Burton, an Englishman, who having made some little reputation and money as a comedian, made haste to lose both as an author and publisher. Poe contributed several odds and ends to the *Gentleman's Magazine* during 1838, and in July of the following year became its editor.

Soon after his arrival in Philadelphia, he issued in a Baltimore publication his favorite tale of "Ligeia," which he says was suggested to him by a dream, but which seems to have had its foundation in the strangely congenial motto he gave it from Glanvill's *Essays*, that "Man doth not yield himself to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will." The story is a marvelous example of Poe's power over his reader's mind, gradually leading him by imperceptible gradations to believe in the impossible,—to credit the weird phantasy that Death is powerless to annihilate Will. "William Wilson," another of its author's *chefs d'œuvre*, and more than usually interesting from the fact that it is, confessedly, in parts autobiographical, appeared about the same time, whilst "The Fall of the House of Usher, a tale illustrative, but in an *outré* form, of the belief in the sentience of all things, speedily followed. "The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion" also appeared in 1839, and although one of the least known of Poe's fictions, is weirdly suggestive, whilst the climax, detailing the destruction of the world by a comet, is as original as it is startling.

Poe now collected several of his stories, and published

them in two volumes as *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, but the limited edition disappeared without appearing to make any great impression on the public, and the acquisition of a single copy of it is a rarity for bibliographers to hold holiday over.

Appointed editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1840, Poe signalized his appointment by the commencement of a new romance in serial form. The first installment of the story appeared in the January number, under the attractive title of "The Journal of Julius Rodman: being an account of the First Passage across the Rocky Mountains of North America ever achieved by Civilized Man." This romance is written in a realistic manner that would have acquired for it a large amount of public notice had it appeared in any publication less obscure than the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and had it ever been issued in a complete form. The late William Sawyer, an appreciative critic, described it as one of Poe's most remarkable works; "it displays," he observes, "singular learning of a varied and exhaustive nature, and is a peculiar example of his unique power of giving his fancies the air of reality. Julius Rodman is placed before us as a real flesh and blood adventurer, and the early part of the narrative is occupied with details of the preparations of the journey, told to the minutest particular, as if seen to, and set down at the moment by one engaged in making them. The companions of the expedition are all described in detail, so that we seem to live among the persons with whom we are setting out; and after we are once on the journey the incidents, big and little, are recorded day by day as in a log, without literary effort, so that the *vraisemblance* is perfect." Alluding then to the probability that the "hand which worked so deftly so far," left the story in the fragmentary

state in which it now is, Mr. Sawyer adds that if carried to completion it would "have been a work of the type of 'Robinson Crusoe,' a fictitious personal narrative, with the stamp of reality set upon it by the creative power of genius, aided by exceptional capacity for observation and knowledge." Monsieur Emile Hennequin has given a translation, in a somewhat abridged form, of this fragment in his admirable version of Poe's "Contes Grotesques," but the accompanying edition is the first in which it has been reproduced in its original state.

In June, 1840, Mr. Burton disposed of the *Gentleman's Magazine* to Mr. George R. Graham, who incorporated it with another little-known periodical and published the combination as *Graham's Magazine*. The transfer of Burton's publication had been made without Poe's knowledge, consequently he found himself out of harness again. At first he endeavored to start a magazine of his own to be called the *Penn Magazine*, but want of funds compelled him to relinquish this project, and accept Mr. Graham's offer to assume the control of *Graham's Magazine*.

For about eighteen months Poe swayed the editorial department of the new periodical and with such success that within that period he raised the circulation from five to fifty-two thousand, and gave it a reputation even among European readers. During this time he published some of his most remarkable tales, such as "The Man of the Crowd," with its acute psychological touches; "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," the initial story of his most famed "trilogy," as Baudelaire named the detective series; the weird and wonderful "Descent into the Maelstrom," in which scientific fact and poetic fiction are combined as no *raconteur* ever combined them before, and the unique "Colloquy of Monos and Una," wherein

the poet once more sought to wrest the mysteries of mortality from its last earthly resting-place, and attempted to pierce the impenetrable veil which overshrouds the visage of Death.

A *prospective* analysis which he published of Dickens' newly begun story of "Barnaby Rudge," drew forth a characteristic communication from the great English novelist, wherein he asked his American reviewer whether he had dealings with the Devil, so accurately had he comprehended the plot of the as yet unwritten, or at any rate unpublished, fiction. What, however, gave him a much greater contemporary reputation than any of these more artistic labors was his publications about Secret Writing. Already in 1839, Poe had promulgated in a Philadelphia journal the theory that human ingenuity could not construct any cryptograph human ingenuity could not decipher. Several correspondents had tested him with specimens of their cryptographical skill and, to their no little astonishment, he had almost instantly returned them solutions of their apparently insoluble puzzles. Whilst editor of *Graham's Magazine* he recommenced issuing articles on this attractive subject, and challenged the public to produce a cryptogram he should not resolve. The many test specimens sent him he triumphantly deciphered at once, often in less time than they had taken their writers to construct, so that it seemed, as a clerical friend wrote, "the facility with which he would unravel the most dark and perplexing ciphers was really supernatural." Over these evidences of his analytic skill and patient ingenuity he wasted much valuable labor he might have devoted to productions worthier of his genius.

In April, 1842, Poe's editorial connection with *Graham's Magazine*, for reasons never really known, came

to a conclusion. Whatever may have been the cause which prompted Poe to resign his appointment the consequences were disastrous. Already, there can be little doubt, the "irregularities" which he "so profoundly lamented," and over which his foes held such savage jubilee, had begun to undermine both his health and reputation. The cause of this terrible scourge was as awesome a fact as any fiction he ever invented. His darling wife, "whom I loved," he declared, "as no man ever loved before," ruptured a blood vessel in singing, and for a time her life was despaired of. "I took leave of her for ever," Poe confessed to a trusted correspondent, "and underwent all the agonies of her death. She recovered partially and I again hoped. At the end of a year the vessel broke again. I went through precisely the same scene. \* \* \* Then again—again—and even once again, at varying intervals. Each time I felt all the agonies of her death—and at each succession of the disorder I loved her more dearly and clung to her life with more desperate pertinacity. But I am constitutionally sensitive—nervous in a very unusual degree. I became insane, with long intervals of horrible sanity. During these fits of absolute unconsciousness I drank—God only knows how often or how much. As a matter of course, my enemies referred the insanity to the drink, rather than the drink to the insanity."

The unhappy catastrophe to his adored wife had already happened before Poe's connection with *Graham's* was severed, and it most probably was the true cause of the severance. Her danger drove him wild and rendered him utterly unfit for literary labor, and consequently unable to provide for the necessities much less the comforts of home. The privations to which he beheld his wife subjected drove him mad. Powerless to provide

anything to alleviate the distress at home, "he would steal out of the house at night," says Mr. A. B. Harris, "and go off and wander about the streets for hours, proud, heartsick, despairing, not knowing which way to turn, or what to do." Mrs. Poe, relates this writer, after the rupture of the blood-vessel "suffered a hundred deaths. She could not bear the slightest exposure, and needed the utmost care; and all those conveniences as to apartments and surroundings which are so important in the case of an invalid were almost matters of life and death to her. And yet the room where she lay for weeks, hardly able to breathe, except as she was fanned, was a little place with the ceiling so low over the narrow bed that her head almost touched it. But no one dared to speak, Mr. Poe was so sensitive and irritable; 'quick as steel and flint,' said one who knew him in those days. And he would not allow a word about the danger of her dying, the mention of it drove him wild."

Captain Mayne Reid, who knew the poet at this time, speaks of his intense affection for his lovely young wife, and says "she in turn idolized him," while Mrs. Clemm was "the ever vigilant guardian of the house, watching it against the silent but continuous sap of necessity, that appeared every day to be approaching closer and nearer." Unable to rely upon literature for a certain income Poe now attempted to obtain a government post; writing to a friend he said, "I would be glad to get almost any appointment \* \* \* so that I may have something independent of letters for a subsistence." But vainly did he strive to procure a position that would have lifted him above the petty necessities of the hour, and yet have left him some leisure to produce artistic work instead of forcing him to fritter away his genius on hasty and crude labor.

Some bright intervals occurred during this period of trial ; a few articles of permanent value were produced, and for "The Gold-Bug," a story written some time previous, Poe got in 1843, a premium of one hundred dollars. This fascinating and most popular romance, which the publisher had not cared to publish, was the outcome of its author's cryptographic pursuits. Besides its attractions as the story of a hidden treasure, and its unriddlement of a curious cipher, it is remarkable as the first attempt to popularize, if not, indeed, to expound, the mathematical ratio in which the letters of the alphabet recur—a subject of great importance in telegraphic and other systems of communication.

In 1844, Poe appears to have received some intimation from N. P. Willis, who had edited the publication in which "The Gold-Bug" appeared, that he might find an opening for his talents in New York. Accordingly he removed once more with his family to the northern capital, but for some months was unable to get better employment than that of a sub-editorship on the *Evening Mirror*, a daily paper of infinitesimal circulation, owned by Willis and George Morris, the song writer. On this paper he was accustomed to work as "a mechanical paragraphist," says Willis, "from nine in the morning until the evening paper went to press," and this arduous and uncongenial labor the poor sensitive poet steadfastly pursued for the sake of the dear ones at home. It was during this period of trial that Poe published, if he did not produce, his wonderful ballad of "The Raven," the most popular fugitive poem ever published. This masterly creation appeared in the *American Review* for February, 1845, but had appeared in the *Evening Mirror*, in advance, on the twenty-ninth of January. "It sent a thrill through the literary world. "In England,"

wrote Mrs. Browning, "'The Raven' has produced a sensation \* \* \* some of my friends are taken by the fear of it, and some by the music. I hear of persons *haunted* by the 'Nevermore.'" If popularity and parody might be deemed criteria of worth, then might "The Raven" be deemed the finest poem extant.

The publication of the short poem did more to bring Poe's name before the literary world than had any of his previous writings. For a time he became the hero of the season, and with his beautiful wife was to be seen in all the chief artistic and literary *réunions* of New York. His wonderful tales and trenchant critiques began to be in request by publishers, and to be eagerly looked for by the public, and although why even an author whose writings were accepted was often without funds readers of "Some Secrets of the Magazine Prison-House" will understand, still pecuniary prospects must, at this period, have somewhat brightened. In February of this year, Poe also added to the interest attached to his name by the delivery in New York of a lecture on "The Poets and Poetry of America." This discourse aroused an immense amount of ill will against him on account of the daring with which he not only attacked the ephemeral reputations of several contemporary favorites, but also vigorously assailed the compilers and journalists who had belauded them into temporary notoriety.

The next month Poe became one of the editors of *The Broadway Journal*, a cheap weekly publication, and some months later, by burdening himself with debt, contrived to become its proprietor. He had no means to pay for contributions, and had no other way of filling its capacious columns than by republication in them of all his own tales and poems, although most of

them were already well known. His efforts to make his *Journal* a high class publication, and to obtain a livelihood by it, were vain, so he had to part with it and relapse into private life. With his dying wife and her mother he beat a retreat from the city and its excitements, and went to reside in a quaint little cottage at Fordham, in the suburbs of New York.

By this time Poe had published nearly all his tales and most of his poems. Paralyzed by the approaching dissolution of his wife, he became unable to write anything of value. His poverty grew daily more extreme, so that he became quite powerless to supply little beyond the barest necessities of life for the dear one whose case demanded so many small comforts. Autumn came and Mrs. Poe fell into a rapid decline, and had not a literary lady, Mrs. Gove-Nichols, discovered and made known to a wealthier friend the painful facts of her illness and poverty, it is impossible to conceive what might have happened. This friend, the "Marie Louise" of Poe's poems, "whose heart and hand were ever open to the poor and miserable," immediately provided the comforts most urgently needed, and by means of a private subscription raised enough money to defray the more pressing wants. Poe's poverty and illness, for he became almost as invalided as his wife, got into the daily papers, and the proud, reticent poet had the horror of seeing all his private affairs bared for the curiosity of the public and the animadversions of his enemies. As soon as able he answered some of his slanderers through the press, but all their troubling was speedily forgotten in the crowning grief of his melancholy career. Owing to the kindness of some friends, and particularly of Marie Louise, the last days of Virginia Poe were soothed and her requirements

supplied, but despite all loving care she passed, on the thirtieth of January, 1846, to that "bourne whence no traveler returns."

After the loss of his beloved wife the desolate poet again fell ill, and for some time remained in a state of helpless apathy. Tenderly nursed by Mrs. Clemm, who steadfastly refused to leave her beloved "Eddie," and still, in compliance with a promise to his departed wife, befriended by Marie Louise, the unfortunate man gradually returned to life and health. Poe resumed his literary avocations but his former passion and enthusiasm were gone. He wrote no more tales, no more criticisms, and, indeed, for a year or so, published nothing but his sad, solemn, "most musical, most melancholy" "Ullalume"—a dirge for the dear departed.

In 1848, Poe began to show some fresh signs of mental activity. During the preceding twelve months or so, he had been thinking over what he deemed should be the crowning point of his career, his grand philosophical prose-poem of "Eureka." With the proceeds which he anticipated this new theory of creation would endow him, he proposed to revert to his life-long scheme of a magazine of his own. As a beginning towards the preliminary expenses, he undertook to deliver a lecture in explanation of the cosmogony of the universe. Not more than sixty persons attended the lecture, and although Poe delivered "a rhapsody of the most intense brilliancy" and kept his listeners "entranced for two hours and a half," so scanty an audience could have done nothing material towards the furtherance of his plans. Nor did the publication of "Eureka" appear to afford much more assistance; only five hundred copies were printed, and probably but few of those sold. Copies of

the original edition of this, as of most of Poe's works, are very rare. "Eureka" has invoked but few commentaries, probably because it has had but few readers, and the only scientific investigation it appears to have received in print, is in an able and sympathetic review by Dr. William Hand Browne, in *The New Eclectic Magazine*.

Other means of starting his magazine failing, Edgar Poe undertook a lecturing tour through the States, although from his highly sensitive poetic temperament he was manifestly unfitted for such a course of life. He lectured with varying success in various parts of the Union, his more personal discourses invoking the largest amount of popularity. Discussing the relative merits of "The Female Poets of America" at one of his lectures, he took occasion to award Helen Whitman praise for "pre-eminence in refinement of art, enthusiasm, imagination, and genius properly so-called," and he also found other means of letting the fair young widow know how deeply her writings had impressed him. Finally, he sought and obtained an introduction to her, and eventually, despite the most urgent remonstrances of her relatives, obtained her promise of marriage. Some romantic incidents followed, and a voluminous correspondence commenced; but after a few months Mrs. Whitman broke off the engagement in consequence of reports being made to her, by certain busybodies, that Poe, despite his pledge to her, had again indulged in alcoholic stimulants. The poet, who never knew why he had been discarded, only entertained an intellectual regard for Mrs. Whitman, although, for a time at least, he endeavored to persuade himself that it was his heart, and not his head, that had been won. But the fair poetess up to her death, in 1878, clung to the memory

of her engagement with Poe, as the one great event of her quiet life.

During this time the poet lived chiefly at Fordham, spending a secluded life with his "more than mother," Mrs. Clemm, and chiefly engaged in correspondence relating to his projected magazine. Occasionally he paid visits to various cities to lecture, and, but rarely, he published some short literary effort: his last productions of any importance being only a few poems, "For Annie," "The Bells," and "Annabel Lee;" the two latter not being published until after his death. In June, 1849, he paid a visit to the South, and spent some pleasant time in Richmond, amid the friends and associates of his early life. His old acquaintances came in numbers to listen to his eloquent lectures on "The Poetic Principle," and to behold their now famous citizen. Among the many friendships he renewed was that of his first love, who had become a rich widow. He renewed his proposals, and it was generally thought was about to be married. He strove earnestly to pursue a quiet and honorable course of life, and even, to emphasize his altered ways, took a pledge of total abstinence, and inspired Mrs. Clemm with renewed hope by sending her the certificate of it.

But, alas, there was no hope for the poor poet! Obligated to visit New York on business, he left Richmond for Baltimore by boat, and reached the latter city safely on the third of October, consigning his trunk to a porter to place in the train for Philadelphia. About the next few hours of his life—the last of his reason—there is an impenetrable mystery. He had been ill and had complained of chilliness and exhaustion when leaving Richmond, therefore, that he was tempted to take some stimulant, or strong dose of narcotic, is

probable. At any rate, the fact is proved that whilst in a helpless condition he fell into the hands of a band of miscreants who were on the lookout for victims, and by them was carried to an electioneering den and drugged with whisky. A member of Congress was being elected that day, and the unfortunate poet, despite his hapless state, was dragged from poll to poll and forced to vote the ticket placed in his hand! In those days it was no unusual thing for such monstrous proceedings to take place, the superintending officials, incredible as it seems, appearing to register votes quite regardless of the condition of the person personating the voter. The election over the unfortunate and dying man was left to perish; but information of his condition having been made known, an old acquaintance had him conveyed to the Washington University Hospital. He does not appear to have ever thoroughly recovered his reason, but sank rapidly, and died on the seventh of October, 1849. Mrs. Clemm, the mother of his beloved wife, and the sharer of so many of his trials, survived to a great age, dying at Baltimore on the sixteenth of February, 1871.

JOHN H. INGRAM.

PROSE POEMS.





## MISCELLANEOUS TALES AND POEMS.

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### THE ISLAND OF THE FAY.

Nullus enim locus sine genio est.—SERVIUS.

“*La musique*,” says Marmontel, in those “Contes Moraux”\* which in all our translations we have insisted upon calling “Moral Tales,” as if in mockery of their spirit—“*la musique est le seul des talens qui jouisse de lui même; tous les autres veulent des temoins.*” He here confounds the pleasure derivable from sweet sounds with the capacity for creating them. No more than any other *talent*, is that for music susceptible of complete enjoyment where there is no second party to appreciate its exercise; and it is only in common with other talents that it produces *effects* which may be fully enjoyed in solitude. The idea which the *raconteur* has either failed to entertain clearly, or has sacrificed in its expression to his national love of *point*, is doubtless the very tenable one that the higher order of music is the most thoroughly estimated when we are exclusively alone. The proposition in this form will be admitted at once by those who love the lyre for its own sake and for its spiritual uses. But there is one pleasure still within the reach of fallen mortality, and perhaps only one, which

\* *Moraux* is here derived from *mœurs*, and its meaning is “*fashionable*,” or more strictly, “of manners.”

owes even more than does music to the accessory sentiment of seclusion. I mean the happiness experienced in the contemplation of natural scenery. In truth the man who would behold aright the glory of God upon earth must in solitude behold that glory. To me at least the presence, not of human life only, but of life in any other form than that of the green things which grow upon the soil and are voiceless, is a stain upon the landscape, is at war with the genius of the scene. I love, indeed, to regard the dark valleys, and the gray rocks, and the waters that silently smile, and the forests that sigh in uneasy slumbers,—and the proud watchful mountains that look down upon all,—I love to regard these as themselves but the colossal members of one vast animate and sentient whole—a whole whose form (that of the sphere) is the most perfect and most inclusive of all; whose path is among associate planets; whose meek handmaiden is the moon; whose mediate sovereign is the sun; whose life is eternity; whose thought is that of a god; whose enjoyment is knowledge; whose destinies are lost in immensity; whose cognizance of ourselves is akin with our own cognizance of the *animalculæ* which infest the brain, a being which we in consequence regard as purely inanimate and material, much in the same manner as these *animalculæ* must thus regard us.

Our telescopes and our mathematical investigations assure us on every hand, notwithstanding the cant of the more ignorant of the priesthood, that space, and therefore that bulk, is an important consideration in the eyes of the Almighty. The cycles in which the stars move are those best adapted for the evolution, without collision, of the greatest possible number of bodies. The forms of those bodies are accurately such

as within a given surface to include the greatest possible amount of matter ; while the surfaces themselves are so disposed as to accommodate a denser population than could be accommodated on the same surfaces otherwise arranged. Nor is it any argument against bulk being an object with God that space itself is infinite ; for there may be an infinity of matter to fill it ; and since we see clearly that the endowment of matter with vitality is a principle—indeed, as far as our judgments extend, the *leading* principle in the operations of Deity, it is scarcely logical to imagine it confined to the regions of the minute, where we daily trace it, and not extending to those of the august. As we find cycle within cycle without end, yet all revolving around one far-distant centre, which is the Godhead, may we not analogically suppose, in the same manner, life within life, the less within the greater, and all within the Spirit Divine? In short, we are madly erring through self-esteem in believing man, in either his temporal or future destinies, to be of more moment in the universe than that vast “clod of the valley” which he tills and contemns, and to which he denies a soul, for no more profound reason than that he does not behold it in operation.\*

These fancies, and such as these, have always given to my meditations among the mountains and the forests, by the rivers and the ocean, a tinge of what the everyday world would not fail to term the fantastic. My wanderings amid such scenes have been many and far-searching, and often solitary ; and the interest with which I have strayed through many a dim deep valley, or gazed into the reflected heaven of many a bright lake, has been an interest greatly deepened by the thought that

\* Speaking of the tides, Pomponius Mela, in his treatise, “*De Situ Orbis*,” says, “either the world is a great animal, or,” etc.

I have strayed and gazed *alone*. What flippant Frenchman \* was it who said, in allusion to the well-known work of Zimmerman, that "*la solitude est une belle chose ; mais il faut quelqu'un pour vous dire que la solitude est une belle chose ?*" The epigram cannot be gainsaid ; but the necessity is a thing that does not exist.

It was during one of my lonely journeyings amid a far-distant region of mountain locked within mountain, and sad rivers and melancholy tarns writhing or sleeping within all, that I chanced upon a certain rivulet and island. I came upon them suddenly in the leafy June, and threw myself upon the turf beneath the branches of an unknown odorous shrub, that I might doze as I contemplated the scene. I felt that thus only should I look on it, such was the character of phantasm which it wore.

On all sides, save to the west where the sun was about sinking, arose the verdant walls of the forest. The little river which turned sharply in its course, and was thus immediately lost to sight, seemed to have no exit from its prison, but to be absorbed by the deep green foliage of the trees to the east ; while in the opposite quarter (so it appeared to me as I lay at length and glanced upward) there poured down noiselessly and continuously into the valley a rich golden and crimson waterfall from the sunset fountains of the sky.

About midway in the short vista which my dreamy vision took in, one small circular island, profusely verdured, reposed upon the bosom of the stream.

So blended bank and shadow there,  
That each seemed pendulous in air—

so mirror-like was the glassy water, that it was scarcely possible to say at what point upon the slope of the emerald turf its crystal dominion began.

\* Balzac, in substance ; I do not remember the words.

My position enabled me to include in a single view both the eastern and western extremities of the islet, and I observed a singularly-marked difference in their aspects. The latter was all one radiant harem of garden beauties. It glowed and blushed beneath the eye of the slant sunlight, and fairly laughed with flowers. The grass was short, springy, sweet-scented, and *Asphodel*-interspersed. The trees were lithe, mirthful, erect, bright, slender and graceful, of eastern figure and foliage, with bark smooth, glossy and parti-colored. There seemed a deep sense of life and joy about all, and although no airs blew from out the heavens, yet everything had motion through the gentle sweepings to and fro of innumerable butterflies, that might have been mistaken for tulips with wings.\*

The other or eastern end of the isle was whelmed in the blackest shade. A sombre, yet beautiful and peaceful gloom here pervaded all things. The trees were dark in color and mournful in form and attitude—wreathing themselves into sad, solemn and spectral shapes that conveyed ideas of mortal sorrow and untimely death. The grass wore the deep tint of the cypress, and the heads of its blades hung droopingly, and hither and thither among it were many small unsightly hillocks, low and narrow and not very long, that had the aspect of graves, but were not, although over and all about them the rue and the rosemary clambered. The shade of the trees fell heavily upon the water, and seemed to bury itself therein, impregnating the depths of the element with darkness. I fancied that each shadow, as the sun descended lower and lower, separated itself sullenly from the trunk that gave it birth, and thus became absorbed by the stream, while other shadows issued momentarily from the trees, taking the place of their predecessors thus entombed.

\* *Florem putares nare per liquidum æthera.—P. Commire.*

This idea having once seized upon my fancy, greatly excited it, and I lost myself forthwith in reverie. "If ever island were enchanted," said I to myself, "this is it. This is the haunt of the few gentle Fays who remain from the wreck of the race. Are these green tombs theirs?—or do they yield up their sweet lives as mankind yield up their own? In dying, do they not rather waste away mournfully, rendering unto God little by little their existence, as these trees render up shadow after shadow, exhausting their substance unto dissolution? What the wasting tree is to the water that imbibes its shade, growing thus blacker by what it preys upon, may not the life of the Fay be to the death which engulfs it?"

As I thus mused, with half-shut eyes, while the sun sank rapidly to rest, and eddying currents careered round and round the island, bearing upon their bosom large dazzling white flakes of the bark of the sycamore, flakes which, in their multiform positions upon the water, a quick imagination might have converted into anything it pleased; while I thus mused, it appeared to me that the form of one of those very Fays about whom I had been pondering made its way slowly into the darkness from out the light at the western end of the island. She stood erect in a singularly fragile canoe, and urged it with the mere phantom of an oar. While within the influence of the lingering sunbeams, her attitude seemed indicative of joy, but sorrow deformed it as she passed within the shade. Slowly she glided along, and at length rounded the islet and re-entered the region of light. "The revolution which has just been made by the Fay," continued I musingly, "is the cycle of the brief year of her life. She has floated through her winter and through her summer. She is a year nearer unto death:" for I did not fail to

see that as she came into the shade, her shadow fell from her, and was swallowed up in the dark water, making its blackness more black.

And again the boat appeared and the Fay, but about the attitude of the latter there was more of care and uncertainty and less of elastic joy. She floated again from out the light and into the gloom (which deepened momentarily) and again her shadow fell from her into the ebony water, and became absorbed into its blackness. And again and again she made the circuit of the island (while the sun rushed down to his slumbers), and at each issuing into the light there was more sorrow about her person, while it grew feebler and far fainter and more indistinct, and at each passage into the gloom there fell from her a darker shade, which became whelmed in a shadow more black. But at length when the sun had utterly departed, the Fay, now the mere ghost of her former self, went disconsolately with her boat into the region of the ebony flood, and that she issued thence at all I cannot say, for darkness fell over all things and I beheld her magical figure no more.



## THE POWER OF WORDS.

*Oinos.* Pardon, Agathos, the weakness of a spirit new-fledged with immortality!

*Agathos.* You have spoken nothing, my Oinos, for which pardon is to be demanded. Not even here is knowledge a thing of intuition. For wisdom, ask of the angels freely, that it may be given!

*Oinos.* But in this existence I dreamed that I should be at once cognizant of all things, and thus at once happy in being cognizant of all.

*Agathos.* Ah, not in knowledge is happiness, but in the acquisition of knowledge! In forever knowing, we are forever blessed; but to know all, were the curse of a fiend.

*Oinos.* But does not The Most High know all?

*Agathos.* *That* (since he is The Most Happy) must be still the *one* thing unknown even to Him.

*Oinos.* But, since we grow hourly in knowledge, must not *at last* all things be known?

*Agathos.* Look down into the abysmal distances!—attempt to force the gaze down the multitudinous vistas of the stars, as we sweep slowly through them thus—and thus—and thus! Even the spiritual vision, is it not at all points arrested by the continuous golden walls of the universe?—the walls of the myriads of the shining bodies that mere number has appeared to blend into unity?

*Oinos.* I clearly perceive that the infinity of matter is no dream.

*Agathos.* There are *no* dreams in Aidenn—but it is

here whispered that, of this infinity of matter, the *sole* purpose is to afford infinite springs at which the soul may allay the thirst to *know* which is forever unquenchable within it—since to quench it would be to extinguish the soul's self. Question me then, my Oinos, freely and without fear. Come! we will leave to the left the loud harmony of the Pleiades, and swoop outward from the throne into the starry meadows beyond Orion, where, for pansies, and violets, and heart's-ease, are the beds of the triplicate and triple-tinted suns.

*Oinos.* And now, Agathos, as we proceed, instruct me!—speak to me in the earth's familiar tones! I understood not what you hinted to me just now of the modes or of the methods of what, during mortality, we were accustomed to call Creation. Do you mean to say that the Creator is not God?

*Agathos.* I mean to say that the Deity does not create.

*Oinos.* Explain!

*Agathos.* In the beginning *only*, He created. The seeming creatures which are now throughout the universe so perpetually springing into being can only be considered as the mediate or indirect, not as the direct or immediate results of the Divine creative power.

*Oinos.* Among men, my Agathos, this idea would be considered heretical in the extreme.

*Agathos.* Among angels, my Oinos, it is seen to be simply true.

*Oinos.* I can comprehend you thus far—that certain operations of what we term Nature, or the natural laws, will, under certain conditions, give rise to that which has all the *appearance* of creation. Shortly before the final overthrow of the earth, there were, I well remember, many very successful experiments in what some

philosophers were weak enough to denominate the creation of animalculæ.

*Agathos.* The cases of which you speak were, in fact, instances of the secondary creation, and of the *only* species of creation which has ever been since the first word spoke into existence the first law.

*Oinos.* Are not the starry worlds that, from the abyss of nonentity, burst hourly forth into the heavens—are not these stars, Agathos, the immediate handiwork of the King?

*Agathos.* Let me endeavor, my Oinos, to lead you, step by step, to the conception I intend. You are well aware that, as no thought can perish, so no act is without infinite result. We moved our hands, for example, when we were dwellers on the earth, and in so doing we gave vibration to the atmosphere which engirdled it. This vibration was indefinitely extended till it gave impulse to every particle of the earth's air, which thenceforward, *and forever*, was actuated by the one movement of the hand. This fact the mathematicians of our globe well knew. They made the special effects, indeed, wrought in the fluid by special impulses, the subject of exact calculation—so that it became easy to determine in what precise period an impulse of given extent would engirdle the orb, and impress (forever) every atom of the atmosphere circumambient. Retrograding, they found no difficulty, from a given effect, under given conditions, in determining the value of the original impulse. Now the mathematicians who saw that the results of any given impulse were absolutely endless—and who saw that a portion of these results were accurately traceable through the agency of algebraic analysis—who saw, too, the facility of the retrogradation—these men saw,

at the same time, that this species of analysis itself had within itself a capacity for indefinite progress—that there were no bounds conceivable to its advancement and applicability, except within the intellect of him who advanced or applied it. But at this point our mathematicians paused.

*Oinos.* And why, Agathos, should they have proceeded?

*Agathos.* Because there were some considerations of deep interest beyond. It was deducible from what they knew, that to a being of infinite understanding—one to whom the *perfection* of the algebraic analysis lay unfolded—there could be no difficulty in tracing every impulse given the air—and the ether through the air—to the remotest consequences at any even infinitely remote epoch of time. It is, indeed, demonstrable that every such impulse *given the air*, must, *in the end*, impress every individual thing that exists *within the universe*;—and the being of infinite understanding—the being whom we have imagined—might trace the remote undulations of the impulse—trace them upward and onward in their influences upon all particles of all matter—upward and onward forever in their modifications of old forms—or, in other words, *in their creation of new*—until he found them reflected—unimpressive *at last*—back from the throne of the Godhead. And not only could such a being do this, but at any epoch, should a given result be afforded him—should one of these numberless comets, for example, be presented to his inspection—he could have no difficulty in determining, by the analytic retrogradation, to what original impulse it was due. This power of retrogradation in its absolute fullness and perfection—this faculty of referring at *all* epochs, *all* effects to *all* causes—is, of course, the prerogative of the Deity alone—but in every variety of

degree, short of the absolute perfection, is the power itself exercised by the whole host of the Angelic Intelligences.

*Oinos.* But you speak merely of impulses upon the air.

*Agathos.* In speaking of the air, I referred only to the earth; but the general proposition has reference to impulses upon the ether—which, since it pervades, and alone pervades all space, is thus the great medium of creation.

*Oinos.* Then all motion of whatever nature, creates?

*Agathos.* It must: but a true philosophy has long taught that the source of all motion is thought—and the source of all thought is—

*Oinos.* God.

*Agathos.* I have spoken to you, *Oinos*, as to a child of the fair Earth which lately perished—of impulses upon the atmosphere of the Earth.

*Oinos.* You did.

*Agathos.* And while I thus spoke, did there not cross your mind some thought of the *physical power of words*? Is not every word an impulse on the air?

*Oinos.* But why, *Agathos*, do you weep—and why, oh why, do your wings droop as we hover above this fair star—which is the greenest and yet most terrible of all we have encountered in our flight? Its brilliant flowers look like a fairy dream—but its fierce volcanoes like the passions of a turbulent heart.

*Agathos.* They *are*!—they *are*! This wild star—it is now three centuries since, with clasped hands and with streaming eyes, at the feet of my beloved—I spoke it—with a few passionate sentences—into birth. Its brilliant flowers *are* the dearest of all unfulfilled dreams, and its raging volcanoes *are* the passions of the most turbulent and unhallowed of hearts.



## THE COLLOQUY OF MONOS AND UNA.

Μελλοντα ταυτα\*

—SOPHOCLES —ANTIGONE.

These things are in the future.

*Una.* “Born again?”

*Monos.* Yes, fairest and best beloved Una, “born again.” These were the words upon whose mystical meaning I had so long pondered, rejecting the explanations of the priesthood, until Death itself resolved for me the secret.

*Una.* Death!

*Monos.* How strangely, sweet Una, you echo my words! I observe, too, a vacillation in your step, a joyous inquietude in your eyes. You are confused and oppressed by the majestic novelty of the Life Eternal. Yes, it was of Death I spoke. And here how singularly sounds that word which of old was wont to bring terror to all hearts, throwing a mildew upon all pleasures!

*Una.* Ah, Death, the spectre which sat at all feasts! How often, Monos, did we lose ourselves in speculations upon its nature! How mysteriously did it act as a check to human bliss, saying unto it, “Thus far, and no farther!” That earnest mutual love, my own Monos, which burned within our bosoms, how vainly did we flatter ourselves, feeling happy in its first upspringing that our happiness would strengthen with its strength! Alas, as it grew, so grew in our hearts the dread of that evil hour which was hurrying to separate us forever! Thus in time it became painful to love. Hate would have been mercy then.

*Monos.* Speak not here of these griefs, dear Una—mine, mine forever now!

*Una.* But the memory of past sorrow, is it not present joy? I have much to say yet of the things which have been. Above all, I burn to know the incidents of your own passage through the dark Valley and Shadow.

*Monos.* And when did the radiant Una ask anything of her Monos in vain? I will be minute in relating all, but at what point shall the weird narrative begin?

*Una.* At what point?

*Monos.* You have said.

*Una.* Monos, I comprehend you. In death we have both learned the propensity of man to define the indefinable. I will not say, then, commence with the moment of life's cessation—but commence with that sad, sad instant, when the fever having abandoned you, you sank into a breathless and motionless torpor, and I pressed down your pallid eyelids with the passionate fingers of love.

*Monos.* One word first, my Una, in regard to man's general condition at this epoch. You will remember that one or two of the wise among our forefathers—wise in fact, although not in the world's esteem—had ventured to doubt the propriety of the term "improvement," as applied to the progress of our civilization. There were periods in each of the five or six centuries immediately preceding our dissolution when arose some vigorous intellect, boldly contending for those principles whose truth appears now, to our disenfranchised reason, so utterly obvious—principles which should have taught our race to submit to the guidance of the natural laws rather than attempt their control. At long intervals some master-minds appeared, looking upon

each advance in practical science as a retrogradation in the true utility. Occasionally the poetic intellect—that intellect which we now feel to have been the most exalted of all—since those truths which to us were of the most enduring importance could only be reached by that *analogy* which speaks in proof-tones to the imagination alone, and to the unaided reason bears no weight—occasionally did this poetic intellect proceed a step farther in the evolving of the vague idea of the philosophic, and find in the mystic parable that tells of the tree of knowledge, and of its forbidden fruit, death-producing, a distinct intimation that knowledge was not meet for man in the infant condition of his soul. And these men—the poets—living and perishing amid the scorn of the “utilitarians”—of rough pedants, who arrogated to themselves a title which could have been properly applied only to the scorned—these men, the poets, pondered piningly, yet not unwisely, upon the ancient days when our wants were not more simple than our enjoyments were keen—days when *mirth* was a word unknown, so solemnly deep-toned was happiness—holy, august, and blissful days, when blue rivers ran undammed, between hills unhewn, into far forest solitudes, primæval, odorous and unexplored. Yet these noble exceptions from the general misrule served but to strengthen it by opposition. Alas! we had fallen upon the most evil of all our evil days. The great “movement”—that was the cant term—went on: a diseased commotion, moral and physical. Art—the Arts—arose supreme, and once enthroned, cast chains upon the intellect which had elevated them to power. Man, because he could not but acknowledge the majesty of Nature, fell into childish exultation at his acquired and still increasing dominion over her elements. Even while he stalked a

God in his own fancy, an infantine imbecility came over him. As might be supposed from the origin of his disorder, he grew infected with system and with abstraction. He enwrapped himself in generalities. Among other odd ideas, that of universal equality gained ground; and in the face of analogy and of God—in despite of the loud warning voice of the laws of *gradation* so visibly pervading all things in Earth and Heaven—wild attempts at an omniprevalent Democracy were made. Yet this evil sprang necessarily from the leading evil, Knowledge. Man could not both know and succumb. Meantime huge smoking cities arose innumerable. Green leaves shrank before the hot breath of furnaces. The fair face of Nature was deformed as with the ravages of some loathsome disease. And methinks, sweet Una, even our slumbering sense of the forced and of the far-fetched might have arrested us here. But now it appears that we had worked out our own destruction in the perversion of our *taste*, or rather in the blind neglect of its culture in the schools. For, in truth, it was at this crisis that taste alone—that faculty which, holding a middle position between the pure intellect and the moral sense, could never safely have been disregarded—it was now that taste alone could have led us gently back to Beauty, to Nature and to Life. But alas for the pure contemplative spirit and majestic intuition of Plato! Alas for the *μουσική* which he justly regarded as an all-sufficient education for the soul! Alas for him and for it!—since both were most desperately needed when both were most entirely forgotten or despised.\*

\* "It will be hard to discover a better [method of education] than that which the experience of so many ages has already discovered; and this may be summed up as consisting in gymnastics for the body and *music* for the soul."—Repub. lib. 2. "For this reason is a musical education most essential; since it causes Rhythm and Harmony to penetrate most

Pascal, a philosopher whom we both love, has said, how truly!—" *que tout notre raisonnement se réduit à céder au sentiment*;" and it is not impossible that the sentiment of the natural, had time permitted it, would have regained its old ascendancy over the harsh mathematical reason of the schools. But this thing was not to be. Prematurely induced by intemperance of knowledge, the old age of the world drew on. This the mass of mankind saw not, or, living lustily although unhappily, affected not to see. But, for myself, the Earth's records had taught me to look for widest ruin as the price of highest civilization. I had imbibed a prescience of our Fate from comparison of China, the simple and enduring; with Assyria, the architect; with Egypt, the astrologer; with Nubia, more crafty than either, the turbulent mother of all Arts. In the history\* of these regions I met with a ray from the Future. The individual artificialities of the three latter were local diseases of the Earth, and in their individual overthrows we had seen local remedies applied; but for the infected world at large I could anticipate no regeneration save in death. That man, as a race, should not become extinct, I saw that he must be "*born again*."

And now it was, fairest and dearest, that we wrapped our spirits daily in dreams. Now it was that, in twilight, we discoursed of the days to come, when the intimately into the soul, taking the strongest hold upon it, filling it with *beauty* and making the man *beautiful-minded*. . . . He will praise and admire *the beautiful*; will receive it with joy into his soul, will feed upon it, and *assimilate his own condition with it*."—*Ibid.* lib. 3. *Musikē* (μουσική) had, however, among the Athenians, a far more comprehensive signification than with us. It included not only the harmonies of time and of tune, but the poetic diction, sentiment, and creation, each in its widest sense. The study of *music* was with them, in fact, the general cultivation of the taste—of that which recognizes the beautiful—in contradistinction from reason, which deals only with the true.

\* "History," from *ιστορειν*, to contemplate.

Art-scarred surface of the Earth, having undergone that purification\* which alone could efface its rectangular obscenities, should clothe itself anew in the verdure and the mountain-slopes and the smiling waters of Paradise, and be rendered at length a fit dwelling-place for man—for man the Death-purged—for man to whose now exalted intellect there should be poison in knowledge no more—for the redeemed, regenerated, blissful, and now immortal, but still for the *material* man.

*Una.* Well do I remember these conversations, dear Monos; but the epoch of the fiery overthrow was not so near at hand as we believed, and as the corruption you indicate did surely warrant us in believing. Men lived and died individually. You yourself sickened and passed into the grave; and thither your constant Una speedily followed you. And though the century which has since elapsed, and whose conclusion brings us thus together once more, tortured our slumbering senses with no impatience of duration, yet my Monos, it was a century still.

*Monos.* Say, rather, a point in the vague infinity. Unquestionably, it was in the Earth's dotage that I died. Wearied at heart with anxieties which had their origin in the general turmoil and decay, I succumbed to the fierce fever. After some few days of pain, and many of dreamy delirium replete with ecstasy, the manifestations of which you mistook for pain, while I longed but was impotent to undeceive you—after some days there came upon me, as you have said, a breathless and motionless torpor; and this was termed *Death* by those who stood around me.

Words are vague things. My condition did not deprive me of sentience. It appeared to me not greatly

\*The word "*purification*" seems here to be used with reference to its roots in the Greek *πυρ*, fire.

dissimilar to the extreme quiescence of him who, having slumbered long and profoundly, lying motionless and fully prostrate in a midsummer noon, begins to steal slowly back into consciousness, through the mere sufficiency of his sleep, and without being awakened by external disturbances.

I breathed no longer. The pulses were still. The heart had ceased to beat. Volition had not departed, but was powerless. The senses were unusually active, although eccentrically so—assuming often each other's functions at random. The taste and the smell were inextricably confounded, and became one sentiment, abnormal and intense. The rose-water with which your tenderness had moistened my lips to the last, affected me with sweet fancies of flowers—fantastic flowers, far more lovely than any of the old Earth, but whose prototypes we have here blooming around us. The eyelids, transparent and bloodless, offered no complete impediment to vision. As volition was in abeyance, the balls could not roll in their sockets—but all objects within the range of the visual hemisphere were seen with more or less distinctness; the rays which fell upon the external retina, or into the corner of the eye, producing a more vivid effect than those which struck the front or interior surface. Yet in the former instance, this effect was so far anomalous that I appreciated it only as *sound*—sound sweet or discordant as the matters presenting themselves at my side were light or dark in shade—curved or angular in outline. The hearing, at the same time, although excited in degree, was not irregular in action—estimating real sounds with an extravagance of precision, not less than of sensibility. Touch had undergone a modification more peculiar. Its impressions were tardily received, but

pertinaciously retained, and resulted always in the highest physical pleasure. Thus the pressure of your sweet fingers upon my eyelids, at first only recognized through vision, at length, long after their removal, filled my whole being with a sensuous delight immeasurable. I say with a sensuous delight. *All* my perceptions were purely sensuous. The materials furnished the passive brain by the senses were not in the least degree wrought into shape by the deceased understanding. Of pain there was some little ; of pleasure there was much ; but of moral pain or pleasure none at all. Thus your wild sobs floated into my ear with all their mournful cadences, and were appreciated in their every variation of sad tone ; but they were soft musical sounds and no more ; they conveyed to the extinct reason no intimation of the sorrows which gave them birth ; while the large and constant tears which fell upon my face, telling the bystanders of a heart which broke, thrilled every fibre of my frame with ecstasy alone. And this was in truth the *Death* of which these bystanders spoke reverently in low whispers—you, sweet Una, gaspingly, with loud cries.

They attired me for the coffin—three or four dark figures which flitted busily to and fro. As these crossed the direct line of my vision they affected me as *forms*, but upon passing to my side their images impressed me with the idea of shrieks, groans, and other dismal expressions of terror, of horror, or of woe. You alone, habited in a white robe, passed in all directions musically about me.

The day waned ; and, as its light faded away, I became possessed by a vague uneasiness—an anxiety such as the sleeper feels when sad real sounds fall continuously within his ear—low distant bell-tones, solemn, at long

but equal intervals, and commingling with melancholy dreams. Night arrived ; and with its shadows a heavy discomfort. It oppressed my limbs with the oppression of some dull weight, and was palpable. There was also a moaning sound, not unlike the distant reverberation of surf, but more continuous, which, beginning with the first twilight, had grown in strength with the darkness. Suddenly lights were brought into the room, and this reverberation became forthwith interrupted into frequent unequal bursts of the same sound, but less dreary and less distinct. The ponderous oppression was in a great measure relieved ; and, issuing from the flame of each lamp (for there were many) there flowed unbrokenly into my ears a strain of melodious monotone. And when now, dear Una, approaching the bed upon which I lay outstretched, you sat gently by my side, breathing odor from your sweet lips, and pressing them upon my brow, there arose tremulously within my bosom, and mingling with the merely physical sensations which circumstances had called forth, a something akin to sentiment itself—a feeling that, half appreciating, half responded to your earnest love and sorrow ; but this feeling took no root in the pulseless heart, and seemed indeed rather a shadow than a reality, and faded quickly away, first into extreme quiescence, and then into a purely sensuous pleasure as before.

And now, from the wreck and the chaos of the usual senses, there appeared to have arisen within me a sixth, all perfect. In its exercise I found a wild delight—yet a delight still physical, inasmuch as the understanding had in it no part. Motion in the animal frame had fully ceased. No muscle quivered ; no nerve thrilled ; no artery throbbed. But there seemed to have sprung up in the brain *that* of which no words could convey to the merely

human intelligence even an indistinct conception. Let me term it a mental pendulous pulsation. It was the moral embodiment of man's abstract idea of *Time*. By the absolute equalization of this movement—or of such as this—had the cycles of the firmamental orbs themselves been adjusted. By its aid I measured the irregularities of the clock upon the mantel, and of the watches of the attendants. Their tickings came sonorously to my ears. The slightest deviations from the true proportion—and these deviations were omniprevalent—affected me just as violations of abstract truth were wont on earth to affect the moral sense. Although no two of the timepieces in the chamber struck the individual seconds accurately together, yet I had no difficulty in holding steadily in mind the tones and the respective momentary errors of each. And this—this keen, perfect self-existing sentiment of *duration*—this sentiment existing (as man could not possibly have conceived it to exist) independently of any succession of events—this idea—this sixth sense, upspringing from the ashes of the rest, was the first obvious and certain step of the intemporal soul upon the threshold of the temporal Eternity.

It was midnight ; and you still sat by my side. All others had departed from the chamber of Death. They had deposited me in the coffin. The lamps burned flickeringly ; for this I knew by the tremulousness of the monotonous strains. But suddenly these strains diminished in distinctness and in volume. Finally they ceased. The perfume in my nostrils died away. Forms affected my vision no longer. The oppression of the Darkness uplifted itself from my bosom. A dull shot like that of electricity pervaded my frame, and was followed by total loss of the idea of contact. All of what man has termed sense was merged in the sole consciousness of entity, and

in the one abiding sentiment of duration. The mortal body had been at length stricken with the hand of the deadly *Decay*.

Yet had not all of sentience departed ; for the consciousness and the sentiment remaining supplied some of its functions by a lethargic intuition. I appreciated the direful change now in operation upon the flesh, and, as the dreamer is sometimes aware of the bodily presence of one who leans over him, so, sweet Una, I still dully felt that you sat by my side. So, too, when the noon of the second day came, I was not unconscious of those movements which displaced you from my side, which confined me within the coffin, which deposited me within the hearse, which bore me to the grave, which lowered me within it, which heaped heavily the mould upon me, and which thus left me, in blackness and corruption, to my sad and solemn slumbers with the worm.

And here, in the prison-house which has few secrets to disclose, there rolled away days and weeks and months ; and the soul watched narrowly each second as it flew, and, without effort, took record of its flight—without effort and without object.

A year passed. The consciousness of *being* had grown hourly more indistinct, and that of mere *locality* had, in great measure, usurped its position. The idea of entity was becoming merged in that of *place*. The narrow space immediately surrounding what had been the body was now growing to be the body itself. At length, as often happens to the sleeper (by sleep and its world alone is *Death* imagined)—at length, as sometimes happened on Earth to the deep slumberer, when some flitting light half startled him into awaking, yet left him half enveloped in dreams—so to me, in the strict embrace of the *Shadow*, came *that* light which alone might

have had power to startle—the light of enduring *Love*. Men toiled at the grave in which I lay darkling. They upthrew the damp earth. Upon my mouldering bones there descended the coffin of Una.

And now again all was void. That nebulous light had been extinguished. That feeble thrill had vibrated itself into quiescence. Many *lustra* had supervened. Dust had returned to dust. The worm had food no more. The sense of being had at length utterly departed, and there reigned in its stead—instead of all things, dominant and perpetual—the autocrats *Place* and *Time*. For *that* which *was not*—for that which had no form—for that which had no thought—for that which had no sentience—for that which was soundless, yet of which matter formed no portion—for all this nothingness, yet for all this immortality, the grave was still a home, and the corrosive hours, co-mates.

## THE CONVERSATION OF EIROS AND CHARMION.

Πῦρ σοι προσοισω  
I will bring fire to thee.

—EURIPIDES—ANDROM.

*Eiros.* Why do you call me Eiros?

*Charmion.* So henceforward will you always be called. You must forget, too, *my* earthly name, and speak to me as Charmion.

*Eiros.* This is indeed no dream!

*Charmion.* Dreams are with us no more;—but of these mysteries anon. I rejoice to see you looking life-like and rational. The film of the shadow has already passed from off your eyes. Be of heart, and fear nothing. Your allotted days of stupor have expired, and to-morrow I will myself induct you into the full joys and wonders of your novel existence.

*Eiros.* True—I feel no stupor—none at all. The wild sickness and the terrible darkness have left me, and I hear no longer that mad, rushing, horrible sound, like the “voice of many waters.” Yet my senses are bewildered, Charmion, with the keenness of their perception of *the new*.

*Charmion.* A few days will remove all this;—but I fully understand you, and feel for you. It is now ten earthly years since I underwent what you undergo—yet the remembrance of it hangs by me still. You have now suffered all of pain, however, which you will suffer in Aidenn.

*Eiros.* In Aidenn.

*Charmion.* In Aidenn.

*Eiros.* O God!—pity me, Charmion!—I am overburdened with the majesty of all things—of the unknown now known—of the speculative Future merged in the august and certain Present.

*Charmion.* Grapple not now with such thoughts. To-morrow we will speak of this. Your mind wavers, and its agitation will find relief in the exercise of simple memories. Look not around, nor forward—but back. I am burning with anxiety to hear the details of that stupendous event which threw you among us. Tell me of it. Let us converse of familiar things, in the old familiar language of the world which has so fearfully perished.

*Eiros.* Most fearfully, fearfully!—this is indeed no dream.

*Charmion.* Dreams are no more. Was I much mourned, my *Eiros*?

*Eiros.* Mourned, Charmion?—oh, deeply. To that last hour of all there hung a cloud of intense gloom and devout sorrow over your household.

*Charmion.* And that last hour—speak of it. Remember that, beyond the naked fact of the catastrophe itself, I know nothing. When, coming out from among mankind, I passed into Night through the Grave—at that period, if I remember aright, the calamity which overwhelmed you was utterly unanticipated. But, indeed, I knew little of the speculative philosophy of the day.

*Eiros.* The individual calamity was, as you say, entirely unanticipated; but analogous misfortunes had been long a subject of discussion with astronomers. I need scarce tell you, my friend, that, even when you left us, men had agreed to understand those passages in the most

holy writings which speak of the final destruction of all things by fire as having reference to the orb of the earth alone. But in regard to the immediate agency of the ruin, speculation had been at fault from that epoch in astronomical knowledge in which the comets were divested of the terrors of flame. The very moderate density of these bodies had been well established. They had been observed to pass among the satellites of Jupiter without bringing about any sensible alteration either in the masses or in the orbits of these secondary planets. We had long regarded the wanderers as vapory creations of inconceivable tenuity, and as altogether incapable of doing injury to our substantial globe, even in the event of contact. But contact was not in any degree dreaded; for the elements of all the comets were accurately known. That among *them* we should look for the agency of the threatened fiery destruction had been for many years considered an inadmissible idea. But wonders and wild fancies had been of late days strangely rife among mankind; and, although it was only with a few of the ignorant that actual apprehension prevailed, upon the announcement by astronomers of a *new* comet, yet this announcement was generally received with I know not what of agitation and mistrust.

The elements of the strange orb were immediately calculated, and it was at once conceded by all observers that its path, at perihelion, would bring it into very close proximity with the earth. There were two or three astronomers of secondary note who resolutely maintained that a contact was inevitable. I cannot very well express to you the effect of this intelligence upon the people. For a few short days they would not believe an assertion which their intellect, so long employed among worldly considerations, could not in any manner

grasp. But the truth of a vitally important fact soon makes its way into the understanding of even the most stolid. Finally, all men saw that astronomical knowledge lied not, and they awaited the comet. Its approach was not at first seemingly rapid, nor was its appearance of very unusual character. It was of a dull red, and had little perceptible train. For seven or eight days we saw no material increase in its apparent diameter, and but a partial alteration in its color. Meantime, the ordinary affairs of men were discarded, and all interest absorbed in a growing discussion instituted by the philosophic in respect to the cometary nature. Even the grossly ignorant aroused their sluggish capacities to such considerations. The learned *now* gave their intellect—their soul—to no such points as the allaying of fear, or to the sustenance of loved theory. They sought—they panted for right views. They groaned for perfected knowledge. *Truth* arose in the purity of her strength and exceeding majesty, and the wise bowed down and adored.

That material injury to our globe or to its inhabitants would result from the apprehended contact was an opinion which hourly lost ground among the wise; and the wise were now freely permitted to rule the reason and the fancy of the crowd. It was demonstrated that the density of the comet's *nucleus* was far less than that of our rarest gas; and the harmless passage of a similar visitor among the satellites of Jupiter was a point strongly insisted upon, and which served greatly to allay terror. Theologians, with an earnestness fear enkindled, dwelt upon the biblical prophecies, and expounded them to the people with a directness and simplicity of which no previous instance had been known. That the final destruction of the earth must be brought about by the agency of fire was urged with

a spirit that enforced everywhere conviction ; and that the comets were of no fiery nature (as all men now knew) was a truth which relieved all, in a great measure, from the apprehension of the great calamity foretold. It is noticeable that the popular prejudices and vulgar errors in regard to pestilences and wars—errors which were wont to prevail upon every appearance of a comet—were now altogether unknown, as if by some sudden convulsive exertion reason had at once hurled superstition from her throne. The feeblest intellect had derived vigor from excessive interest.

What minor evils might arise from the contact were points of elaborate question. The learned spoke of slight geological disturbances, of probable alterations in climate and consequently in vegetation ; of possible magnetic and electric influences. Many held that no visible or perceptible effect would in any manner be produced. While such discussions were going on, their subject gradually approached, growing larger in apparent diameter, and of a more brilliant lustre. Mankind grew paler as it came. All human operations were suspended.

There was an epoch in the course of the general sentiment when the comet had attained, at length, a size surpassing that of any previously recorded visitation. The people now, dismissing any lingering hope that the astronomers were wrong, experienced all the certainty of evil. The chimerical aspect of their terror was gone. The hearts of the stoutest of our race beat violently within their bosoms. A very few days sufficed, however, to merge even such feelings in sentiments more unendurable. We could no longer apply to the strange orb any *accustomed* thoughts. Its *historical* attributes had disappeared. It oppressed us with a hideous *novelty* of emotion. We saw it not as an astronomical phenomenon

in the heavens, but as an incubus upon our hearts and a shadow upon our brains. It had taken, with inconceivable rapidity, the character of a gigantic mantle of rare flame, extending from horizon to horizon.

Yet a day, and men breathed with greater freedom. It was clear that we were already within the influence of the comet ; yet we lived. We even felt an unusual elasticity of frame and vivacity of mind. The exceeding tenuity of the object of our dread was apparent ; for all heavenly objects were plainly visible through it. Meantime, our vegetation had perceptibly altered ; and we gained faith, from this predicted circumstance, in the foresight of the wise. A wild luxuriance of foliage, utterly unknown before, burst out upon every vegetable thing.

Yet another day—and the evil was not altogether upon us. It was now evident that its nucleus would first reach us. A wild change had come over all men ; and the first sense of *pain* was the wild signal for general lamentation and horror. This first sense of pain lay in a rigorous constriction of the breast and lungs, and an insufferable dryness of the skin. It could not be denied that our atmosphere was radically affected ; the conformation of this atmosphere and the possible modifications to which it might be subjected, were now the topics of discussion. The result of investigation sent an electric thrill of the intensest terror through the universal heart of man.

It had been long known that the air which encircled us was a compound of oxygen and nitrogen gases, in the proportion of twenty-one measures of oxygen and seventy-nine of nitrogen in every one hundred of the atmosphere. Oxygen, which was the principle of combustion and the vehicle of heat, was absolutely necessary to the support of animal life, and was the most powerful and

energetic agent in nature. Nitrogen, on the contrary, was incapable of supporting either animal life or flame. An unnatural excess of oxygen would result, it had been ascertained, in just such an elevation of the animal spirits as we had latterly experienced. It was the pursuit, the extension of the idea, which had engendered awe. What would be the result of a *total extraction of the nitrogen*? A combustion irresistible, all-devouring, omniprevalent, immediate ;—the entire fulfillment, in all their minute and terrible details, of the fiery and horror-inspiring denunciations of the prophecies of the Holy Book.

Why need I paint, Charmion, the now disenchained frenzy of mankind? That tenuity in the comet which had previously inspired us with hope, was now the source of the bitterness of despair. In its impalpable gaseous character we clearly perceived the consummation of Fate. Meantime a day again passed—bearing away with it the last shadow of Hope. We gasped in the rapid modification of the air. The red blood bounded tumultuously through its strict channels. A furious delirium possessed all men ; and with arms rigidly outstretched towards the threatening heavens, they trembled and shrieked aloud. But the nucleus of the destroyer was now upon us—even here in Aidenn. I shudder while I speak. Let me be brief—brief as the ruin that overwhelmed. For a moment there was a wild lurid light alone, visiting and penetrating all things. Then—let us bow down, Charmion, before the excessive majesty of the great God!—then there came a shouting and pervading sound, as if from the mouth itself of HIM ; while the whole incumbent mass of ether in which we existed, burst at once into a species of intense flame, for whose surpassing brilliancy and all-fervid heat even the angels in the high Heaven of pure knowledge have no name. Thus ended all.







Abot. sc.

Wogel. L. 1111

# SHADOW

## SHADOW.—A PARABLE.

Yea ! though I walk through the valley of the *Shadow*.

—PSALM OF DAVID.

Ye who read are still among the living ; but I who write shall have long since gone my way into the region of shadows. For indeed strange things shall happen, and secret things be known, and many centuries shall pass away, ere these memorials be seen of men. And, when seen, there will be some to disbelieve and some to doubt, and yet a few who will find much to ponder upon in the characters here graven with a stylus of iron.

The year had been a year of terror, and of feelings more intense than terror for which there is no name upon the earth. For many prodigies and signs had taken place, and far and wide, over sea and land, the black wings of the Pestilence were spread abroad. To those, nevertheless, cunning in the stars, it was not unknown that the heavens wore an aspect of ill ; and to me, the Greek Oinos, among others, it was evident that now had arrived the alternation of that seven hundred and ninety-fourth year when, at the entrance of Aries, the planet Jupiter is conjoined with the red ring of the terrible Saturnus. The peculiar spirit of the skies, if I mistake not greatly, made itself manifest, not only in the physical orb of the earth, but in the souls, imaginations, and meditations of mankind.

Over some flasks of the red Chian wine, within the walls of a noble hall in a dim city called Ptolemais, we

sat, at night, a company of seven. And to our chamber there was no entrance save by a lofty door of brass: and the door was fashioned by the artisan Corinnos, and, being of rare workmanship, was fastened from within. Black draperies, likewise, in the gloomy room, shut out from our view the moon, the lurid stars, and the peopleless streets—but the boding and the memory of Evil, they would not be so excluded. There were things around us and about of which I can render no distinct account—things material and spiritual—heaviness in the atmosphere—a sense of suffocation—anxiety—and, above all, that terrible state of existence which the nervous experience when the senses are keenly living and awake, and meanwhile the powers of thought lie dormant. A dead weight hung upon us. It hung upon our limbs—upon the household furniture—upon the goblets from which we drank; and all things were depressed and borne down thereby—all things save only the flames of the seven iron lamps which illumined our revel. Up-rearing themselves in tall slender lines of light, they thus remained burning, all pallid and motionless; and in the mirror which their lustre formed upon the round table of ebony at which we sat, each of us there assembled beheld the pallor of his own countenance and the unquiet glare in the downcast eyes of his companions. Yet we laughed and were merry in our proper way—which was hysterical; and sang the songs of Anacreon—which are madness; and drank deeply—although the purple wine reminded us of blood. For there was yet another tenant of our chamber in the person of young Zoilus. Dead and at full length he lay, enshrouded—the genius and the demon of the scene. Alas! he bore no portion in our mirth, save that his countenance, distorted with the plague, and his eyes in which Death had

but half extinguished the fire of the pestilence, seemed to take such interest in our merriment as the dead may haply take in the merriment of those who are to die. But although I, Oinos, felt that the eyes of the departed were upon me, still I forced myself not to perceive the bitterness of their expression, and gazing down steadily into the depths of the ebony mirror, sang with a loud and sonorous voice the songs of the son of Teios. But gradually my songs they ceased, and their echoes, rolling afar off among the sable draperies of the chamber, became weak and undistinguishable, and so faded away. And lo! from among those sable draperies where the sounds of the song departed there came forth a dark and undefined shadow—a shadow such as the moon, when low in heaven, might fashion from the figure of a man: but it was the shadow neither of man, nor of God, nor of any familiar thing. And quivering awhile among the draperies of the room, it at length rested in full view upon the surface of the door of brass. But the shadow was vague and formless and indefinite, and was the shadow neither of man nor God—neither God of Greece, nor God of Chaldæa, nor any Egyptian God. And the shadow rested upon the brazen doorway, and under the arch of the entablature of the door and moved not, nor spoke any word, but there became stationary and remained. And the door whereupon the shadow rested was, if I remember aright, over against the feet of the young Zoilus enshrouded. But we, the seven there assembled, having seen the shadow as it came out from among the draperies, dared not steadily behold it, but cast down our eyes, and gazed continually into the depths of the mirror of ebony. And at length I, Oinos, speaking some low words, demanded of the shadow its dwelling and its appellation. And the shadow answered,

“I am SHADOW, and my dwelling is near to the Catacombs of Ptolemais, and hard by those dim plains of Elusion which border upon the foul Charonian canal.” And then did we, the seven, start from our seats in horror, and stand trembling, and shuddering, and aghast; for the tones in the voice of the shadow were not the tones of any one being, but of a multitude of beings, and varying in their cadences from syllable to syllable, fell duskily upon our ears in the well-remembered and familiar accents of many thousand departed friends.





F Méaulle

SILENCE





F Méaulle

SILENCE

## SILENCE.—A FABLE.

Ἐνδουσιν δ' ὀρεων κορυφαὶ τε καὶ φαράγγες,  
Πρῶνες τε καὶ χαράδραι.

—ALCMAN.

The mountain pinnacles slumber ; valleys, crags, and caves are *silent*.

“Listen to *me*,” said the Demon, as he placed his hand upon my head. “The region of which I speak is a dreary region in Libya, by the borders of the river Zaïre. And there is no quiet there, nor silence.

“The waters of the river have a saffron and sickly hue ; and they flow not onward to the sea, but palpitate forever and forever beneath the red eye of the sun with a tumultuous and convulsive motion. For many miles on either side of the river’s oozy bed is a pale desert of gigantic water-lilies. They sigh one unto the other in that solitude, and stretch towards the heaven their long and ghastly necks, and nod to and fro their everlasting heads. And there is an indistinct murmur which cometh out from among them like the rushing of subterrene water. And they sigh one unto the other.

“But there is a boundary to their realm—the boundary of the dark, horrible, lofty forest. There, like the waves about the Hebrides, the low underwood is agitated continually. But there is no wind throughout the heaven. And the tall primeval trees rock eternally hither and thither with a crashing and mighty sound. And from their high summits, one by one, drop everlasting dews. And at the roots strange poisonous flowers lie writhing in perturbed slumber. And overhead,

with a rustling and loud noise, the gray clouds rush westwardly forever, until they roll, a cataract, over the fiery wall of the horizon. But there is no wind throughout the heaven. And by the shores of the river Zaïre there is neither quiet nor silence.

“It was night, and the rain fell ; and, falling, it was rain, but, having fallen, it was blood. And I stood in the morass among the tall lilies, and the rain fell upon my head—and the lilies sighed one unto the other in the solemnity of their desolation.

“And, all at once, the moon arose through the thin ghastly mist, and was crimson in color. And mine eyes fell upon a huge gray rock which stood by the shore of the river, and was lighted by the light of the moon. And the rock was gray, and ghastly, and tall—and the rock was gray. Upon its front were characters engraven in the stone ; and I walked through the morass of water-lilies until I came close unto the shore, that I might read the characters upon the stone. But I could not decipher them. And I was going back into the morass when the moon shone with a fuller red, and I turned and looked again upon the rock and upon the characters—and the characters were DESOLATION.

“And I looked upwards, and there stood a man upon the summit of the rock ; and I hid myself among the water-lilies that I might discover the actions of the man. And the man was tall and stately in form, and was wrapped up from his shoulders to his feet in the toga of old Rome. And the outlines of his figure were indistinct—but his features were the features of a deity ; for the mantle of the night, and of the mist, and of the moon, and of the dew, had left uncovered the features of his face. And his brow was lofty with thought, and his eye wild with care ; and, in the few furrows upon his cheek,

I read the fables of sorrow, and weariness, and disgust with mankind, and a longing after solitude.

“And the man sat upon the rock, and leaned his head upon his hand, and looked out upon the desolation. He looked down into the low unquiet shrubbery, and up into the tall primeval trees, and up higher at the rustling heaven, and into the crimson moon. And I lay close within shelter of the lilies, and observed the actions of the man. And the man trembled in the solitude;—but the night waned, and he sat upon the rock.

“And the man turned his attention from the heaven, and looked out upon the dreary river Zaïre, and upon the yellow ghastly waters, and upon the pale legions of the water-lilies. And the man listened to the sighs of the water-lilies, and to the murmur that came up from among them. And I lay close within my covert and observed the actions of the man. And the man trembled in the solitude;—but the night waned and he sat upon the rock.

“Then I went down into the recesses of the morass, and waded far in among the wilderness of the lilies, and called unto the hippopotami which dwelt among the fens in the recesses of the morass. And the hippopotami heard my call, and came, with the behemoth, under the foot of the rock, and roared loudly and fearfully beneath the moon. And I lay close within my covert and observed the actions of the man. And the man trembled in the solitude;—but the night waned and he sat upon the rock.

“Then I cursed the elements with the curse of tumult; and a frightful tempest gathered in the heaven, where before there had been no wind. And the heaven became livid with the violence of the tempest—and the rain beat upon the head of the man—and the floods of the river

came down—and the river was tormented into foam—and the water-lilies shrieked within their beds—and the forest crumbled before the wind—and the thunder rolled—and the lightning fell—and the rock rocked to its foundation. And I lay close within my covert and observed the actions of the man. And the man trembled in the solitude ;—but the night waned and he sat upon the rock.

“Then I grew angry and cursed, with the curse of *silence*, the river, and the lilies, and the wind, and the forest, and the heaven, and the thunder, and the sighs of the water-lilies. And they became accursed, and *were still*. And the moon ceased to totter up its pathway to heaven—and the thunder died away—and the lightning did not flash—and the clouds hung motionless—and the waters sunk to their level and remained—and the trees ceased to rock—and the water-lilies sighed no more—and the murmur was heard no longer from among them, nor any shadow of sound throughout the vast illimitable desert. And I looked upon the characters of the rock, and they were changed ;—and the characters were SILENCE.

“And mine eyes fell upon the countenance of the man, and his countenance was wan with terror. And, hurriedly, he raised his head from his hand, and stood forth upon the rock and listened. But there was no voice throughout the vast illimitable desert, and the characters upon the rock were SILENCE. And the man shuddered, and turned his face away, and fled afar off, in haste, so that I beheld him no more.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Now there are fine tales in the volumes of the Magi—in the iron-bound, melancholy volumes of the Magi. Therein, I say, are glorious histories of the Heaven, and

of the Earth, and of the mighty Sea—and of the Genii that overruled the sea, and the earth, and the lofty heaven. There was much lore, too, in the sayings which were said by the sibyls; and holy, holy things were heard of old by the dim leaves that trembled around Dodona—but, as Allah liveth, that fable which the Demon told me as he sat by my side in the shadow of the tomb, I hold to be the most wonderful of all! And as the Demon made an end of his story, he fell back within the cavity of the tomb and laughed. And I could not laugh with the Demon, and he cursed me because I could not laugh. And the lynx which dwelleth forever in the tomb, came out therefrom, and lay down at the feet of the Demon, and looked him steadily in the face.



## THE POETIC PRINCIPLE.

In speaking of the Poetic Principle, I have no design to be either thorough or profound. While discussing very much at random the essentiality of what we call Poetry, my principal purpose will be to cite for consideration some few of those minor English or American poems which best suit my own taste, or which, upon my own fancy, have left the most definite impression. By "minor poems" I mean, of course, poems of little length. And here, in the beginning, permit me to say a few words in regard to a somewhat peculiar principle, which, whether rightfully or wrongfully, has always had its influence in my own critical estimate of the poem. I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase, "a long poem," is simply a flat contradiction in terms.

I need scarcely observe that a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychal necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags—fails—a revulsion ensues—and then the poem is, in effect, and in fact, no longer such.

There are, no doubt, many who have found difficulty in reconciling the critical dictum that the "Paradise

Lost" is to be devoutly admired throughout, with the absolute impossibility of maintaining for it, during perusal, the amount of enthusiasm which that critical dictum would demand. This great work, in fact, is to be regarded as poetical only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of Art, Unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. If, to preserve its Unity—its totality of effect or impression—we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression. After a passage of what we feel to be true poetry, there follows, inevitably, a passage of platitude which no critical pre-judgment can force us to admire; but if, upon completing the work, we read it again, omitting the first book—that is to say, commencing with the second—we shall be surprised at now finding that admirable which we before condemned—that damnable which we had previously so much admired. It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun, is a nullity—and this is precisely the fact.

In regard to the Iliad, we have, if not positive proof, at least very good reason, for believing it intended as a series of lyrics; but, granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based in an imperfect sense of Art. The modern epic is, of the supposititious ancient model, but an inconsiderate and blindfold imitation. But the day of these artistic anomalies is over. If, at any time, any very long poem *were* popular in reality—which I doubt—it is at least clear that no very long poem will ever be popular again.

That the extent of a poetical work is, *ceteris paribus*, the measure of its merit, seems undoubtedly, when we thus state it, a proposition sufficiently absurd—yet we

are indebted for it to the Quarterly Reviews. Surely there can be nothing in mere *size*, abstractly considered—there can be nothing in mere *bulk*, so far as a volume is concerned, which has so continuously elicited admiration from these saturnine pamphlets! A mountain, to be sure, by the mere sentiment of physical magnitude which it conveys, *does* impress us with a sense of the sublime—but no man is impressed after *this* fashion by the material grandeur of even “The Columbiad.” Even the Quarterlies have not instructed us to be so impressed by it. *As yet*, they have not *insisted* on our estimating Lamartine by the cubic foot, or Pollock by the pound—but what else are we to *infer* from their continual prating about “sustained effort?” If, by “sustained effort,” any little gentleman has accomplished an epic, let us frankly commend him for the effort—if this indeed be a thing commendable—but let us forbear praising the epic on the effort’s account. It is to be hoped that common sense, in the time to come, will prefer deciding upon a work of Art rather by the impression it makes—by the effect it produces—than by the time it took to impress the effect, or by the amount of “sustained effort” which had been found necessary in effecting the impression. The fact is, that perseverance is one thing and genius quite another—nor can all the Quarterlies in Christendom confound them. By-and-by, this proposition, with many which I have been just urging, will be received as self-evident. In the meantime, by being generally condemned as falsities, they will not be essentially damaged as truths.

On the other hand, it is clear that a poem may be improperly brief. Undue brevity degenerates into mere epigrammatism. A *very* short poem, while now and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produces a

profound or enduring effect. There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax. De Béranger has wrought innumerable things, pungent and spirit-stirring, but in general they have been too imponderous to stamp themselves deeply into the public attention, and thus, as so many feathers of fancy, have been blown aloft only to be whistled down the wind.

A remarkable instance of the effect of undue brevity in depressing a poem, in keeping it out of the popular view, is afforded by the following exquisite little Serenade :

I arise from dreams of thee,  
 In the first sweet sleep of night,  
 When the winds are breathing low,  
 And the stars are shining bright.  
 I arise from dreams of thee,  
 And a spirit in my feet  
 Has led me—who knows how?—  
 To thy chamber-window, sweet!

The wandering airs they faint  
 On the dark, the silent stream—  
 The champak odors fail  
 Like sweet thoughts in a dream;  
 The nightingale's complaint,  
 It dies upon her heart,  
 As I must die on thine,  
 O beloved, as thou art!

Oh, lift me from the grass!  
 I die, I faint, I fail!  
 Let thy love in kisses rain  
 On my lips and eyelids pale.  
 My cheek is cold and white, alas!  
 My heart beats loud and fast:  
 Oh! press it close to thine again,  
 Where it will break at last?

Very few perhaps are familiar with these lines, yet no less a poet than Shelley is their author. Their warm, yet delicate and ethereal imagination will be appreciated by all, but by none so thoroughly as by him who has

himself arisen from sweet dreams of one beloved to bathe in the aromatic air of a southern midsummer night.

One of the finest poems by Willis, the very best in my opinion which he has ever written, has, no doubt through this same defect of undue brevity, been kept back from its proper position, not less in the critical than in the popular view.

The shadows lay along Broadway,  
'Twas near the twilight-tide—  
And slowly there a lady fair  
Was walking in her pride.  
Alone walked she; but, viewlessly,  
Walk'd spirits at her side.

Peace charm'd the street beneath her feet,  
And Honor charm'd the air;  
And all astir looked kind on her,  
And called her good as fair—  
For all God ever gave to her  
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare  
From lovers warm and true—  
For heart was cold to all but gold,  
And the rich came not to woo—  
But honor'd well her charms to sell  
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair—  
A slight girl, lily-pale;  
And she had unseen company  
To make the spirit quail—  
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walk'd forlorn,  
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow  
From this world's peace to pray,  
For as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,  
Her woman's heart gave way!—  
But the sin forgiven by Christ in Heaven  
By man is cursed away!

In this composition we find it difficult to recognize the Willis who has written so many mere "verses of society." The lines are not only richly ideal, but full of

energy, while they breathe an earnestness, an evident sincerity of sentiment, for which we look in vain throughout all the other works of this author.

While the epic mania, while the idea that to merit in poetry prolixity is indispensable, has for some years past been gradually dying out of the public mind, by mere dint of its own absurdity, we find it succeeded by a heresy too palpably false to be long tolerated, but one which, in the brief period it has already endured, may be said to have accomplished more in the corruption of our Poetical Literature than all its other enemies combined. I allude to the heresy of *The Didactic*. It has been assumed, tacitly and avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of all Poetry is Truth. Every poem, it is said, should inculcate a moral, and by this moral is the poetical merit of the word to be adjudged. We Americans especially have patronized this happy idea, and we Bostonians very especially have developed it in full. We have taken it into our heads that to write a poem simply for the poem's sake, and to acknowledge such to have been our design, would be to confess ourselves radically wanting in the true Poetic dignity and force :—but the simple fact is, that would we but permit ourselves to look into our own souls we should immediately there discover that under the sun there neither exists nor *can* exist any work more thoroughly dignified, more supremely noble, than this very poem, this poem *per se*, this poem which is a poem and nothing more, this poem written solely for the poem's sake.

With as deep a reverence for the True as ever inspired the bosom of man, I would nevertheless limit, in some measure, its modes of inculcation. I would limit to enforce them. I would not enfeeble them by dissipation. The demands of Truth are severe. She has no sympathy

with the myrtles. All *that* which is so indispensable in Song is precisely all *that* with which *she* has nothing whatever to do. It is but making her a flaunting paradox to wreath her in gems and flowers. In enforcing a truth we need severity rather than efflorescence of language. We must be simple, precise, terse. We must be cool, calm, unimpassioned. In a word, we must be in that mood which, as nearly as possible, is the exact converse of the poetical. *He* must be blind indeed who does not perceive the radical and chasmal difference between the truthful and the poetical modes of inculcation. *He* must be theory-mad beyond redemption who, in spite of these differences, shall still persist in attempting to reconcile the obstinate oils and waters of Poetry and Truth.

Dividing the world of mind into its three most immediately obvious distinctions, we have the Pure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Sense. I place Taste in the middle because it is just this position which in the mind it occupies. It holds intimate relations with either extreme; but from the Moral sense is separated by so faint a difference that Aristotle has not hesitated to place some of its operations among the virtues themselves. Nevertheless we find the *offices* of the trio marked with a sufficient distinction. Just as the Intellect concerns itself with Truth, so Taste informs us of the Beautiful, while the moral sense is regardful of Duty. Of this latter, while conscience teaches the obligation and Reason the expediency, Taste contents herself with displaying the charms, waging war upon Vice solely on the ground of her deformity, her disproportion, her animosity to the fitting, to the appropriate, to the harmonious, in a word, to Beauty.

An immortal instinct deep within the spirit of man is thus plainly a sense of the Beautiful. This it is which

administers to his delight in the manifold forms, and sounds, and odors, and sentiments, amid which he exists. And just as the lily is repeated in the lake, or the eyes of Amaryllis in the mirror, so is the mere oral or written repetition of these forms, and sounds, and colors, and odors, and sentiments, a duplicate source of delight. But this mere repetition is not poetry. He who shall simply sing, with however glowing enthusiasm, or with however vivid a truth of description of the sights, and sounds, and odors, and colors, and sentiments which greet *him* in common with all mankind—he, I say, has yet failed to prove his divine title. There is still a something in the distance which he has been unable to attain. We have still a thirst unquenchable, to allay which he has not shown us the crystal springs. This thirst belongs to the immortality of Man. It is at once a consequence and an indication of his perennial existence. It is the desire of the moth for the star. It is no mere appreciation of the Beauty before us, but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above. Inspired by an ecstatic prescience of the glories beyond the grave, we struggle by multiform combinations among the things and thoughts of Time to attain a portion of that Loveliness whose very elements perhaps appertain to eternity alone. And thus when by Poetry, or when by Music, the most entrancing of the Poetic moods, we find ourselves melted into tears, we weep then, not as the Abbate Gravina supposes, through excess of pleasure, but through a certain petulant, impatient sorrow at our inability to grasp *now*, wholly, here on earth, at once and forever, those divine and rapturous joys of which *through* the poem, or *through* the music, we attain to but brief and indeterminate glimpses.

The struggle to apprehend the supernal Loveliness

—this struggle, on the part of souls fittingly constituted—has given to the world all *that* which it (the world) has ever been enabled at once to understand and *to feel* as poetic.

The Poetic Sentiment, of course, may develop itself in various modes—in Painting, in Sculpture, in Architecture, in the Dance—very especially in Music—and very peculiarly, and with a wide field, in the composition of the Landscape Garden. Our present theme, however, has regard only to its manifestation in words. And here let me speak briefly on the topic of rhythm. Contenting myself with the certainty that Music, in its various modes of metre, rhythm, and rhyme, is of so vast a moment in Poetry as never to be wisely rejected—is so vitally important an adjunct, that he is simply silly who declines its assistance, I will not now pause to maintain its absolute essentiality. It is in Music perhaps that the soul most nearly attains the great end for which, when inspired by the Poetic Sentiment, it struggles—the creation of supernal Beauty. It *may* be, indeed, that here this sublime end is, now and then, attained in *fact*. We are often made to feel, with a shivering delight, that from an earthly harp are stricken notes which *cannot* have been unfamiliar to the angels. And thus there can be little doubt that in the union of Poetry with Music in its popular sense, we shall find the widest field for the Poetic development. The old Bards and Minnesingers had advantages which we do not possess—and Thomas Moore, singing his own songs, was, in the most legitimate manner, perfecting them as poems.

To recapitulate then:—I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect, or with

the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with Duty or with Truth.

A few words, however, in explanation. *That* pleasure which is at once the most pure, the most elevating and the most intense, is derived, I maintain, from the contemplation of the Beautiful. In the contemplation of Beauty we alone find it possible to attain that pleasurable elevation, or excitement *of the soul*, which we recognize as the Poetic Sentiment, and which is so easily distinguished from Truth, which is the satisfaction of the Reason, or from Passion, which is the excitement of the heart. I make Beauty, therefore—using the word as inclusive of the sublime—I make Beauty the province of the poem, simply because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring as directly as possible from their causes:—no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation in question is at least *most readily* attainable in the poem. It by no means follows, however, that the incitements of Passion, or the precepts of Duty, or even the lessons of Truth, may not be introduced into a poem, and with advantage; for they may subserve incidentally, in various ways, the general purposes of the work:—but the true artist will always contrive to tone them down in proper subjection to that *Beauty* which is the atmosphere and the real essence of the poem.

I cannot better introduce the few poems which I shall present for your consideration, than by the citation of the Prœm to Mr. Longfellow's "Waif:"

The day is done, and the darkness  
Falls from the wings of Night,  
As a feather is wafted downward  
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village  
Gleam through the rain and the mist,  
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,  
That my soul cannot resist ;

A feeling of sadness and longing,  
That is not akin to pain,  
And resembles sorrow only  
As the mist resembles the rain,

Come, read to me some poem,  
Some simple and heartfelt lay,  
That shall soothe this restless feeling,  
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,  
Not from the bards sublime,  
Whose distant footsteps echo  
Through the corridors of time.

For, like strains of martial music,  
Their mighty thoughts suggest  
Life's endless toil and endeavor ;  
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,  
Whose songs gushed from his heart  
As showers from the clouds of summer,  
Or tears from the eyelids start ;

Who through long days of labor,  
And nights devoid of ease,  
Still heard in his soul the music  
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet  
The restless pulse of care,  
And come like the benediction  
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume  
The poem of thy choice,  
And lend to the rhyme of the poet  
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,  
And the cares that infest the day  
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,  
And as silently steal away.

With no great range of imagination, these lines have been justly admired for their delicacy of expression.

Some of the images are very effective. Nothing can be better than—

———— The bards sublime,  
Whose distant footsteps echo  
Through the corridors of Time.

The idea of the last quatrain is also very effective. The poem on the whole, however, is chiefly to be admired for the graceful *insouciance* of its metre, so well in accordance with the character of the sentiments, and especially for the *ease* of the general manner. This “ease” or naturalness, in a literary style, it has long been the fashion to regard as ease in appearance alone—as a point of really difficult attainment. But not so :—a natural manner is difficult only to him who should never meddle with it—to the unnatural. It is but the result of writing with the understanding, or with the instinct, that *the tone*, in composition, should always be that which the mass of mankind would adopt—and must perpetually vary, of course, with the occasion. The author who, after the fashion of *The North American Review*, should be upon *all* occasions, merely “quiet,” must necessarily upon *many* occasions, be simply silly or stupid, and has no more right to be considered “easy” or “natural” than a Cockney exquisite, or than the Sleeping Beauty in the waxworks.

Among the minor poems of Bryant, none has so much impressed me as the one which he entitles “June.” I quote only a portion of it :

There, through the long, long summer hours,  
The golden light should lie,  
And thick young herbs and groups of flowers  
Stand in their beauty by.  
The oriole should build and tell  
His love-tale, close beside my cell ;  
The idle butterfly  
Should rest him there, and there be heard  
The housewife-bee and humming bird.

And what, if cheerful shouts at noon,  
 Come, from the village sent,  
 Or songs of maids, beneath the moon,  
     With fairy laughter blent?  
 And what if, in the evening light,  
 Betrothed lovers walk in sight  
     Of my low monument?  
 I would the lovely scene around  
 Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know, I know I should not see  
     The season's glorious show,  
 Nor would its brightness shine for me,  
     Nor its wild music flow;  
 But if, around my place of sleep,  
 The friends I love should come to weep,  
     They might not haste to go.  
 Soft airs, and song, and light and bloom  
 Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their soften'd hearts should bear  
     The thought of what has been,  
 And speak of one who cannot share  
     The gladness of the scene;  
 Whose part in all the pomp that fills  
 The circuit of the summer hills,  
     Is—that his grave is green;  
 And deeply would their hearts rejoice  
 To hear again his living voice.

The rhythmical flow here is even voluptuous—nothing could be more melodious. The poem has always affected me in a remarkable manner. The intense melancholy which seems to well up, perforce, to the surface of all the poet's cheerful sayings about his grave, we find thrilling us to the soul—while there is the truest poetic elevation in the thrill. The impression left is one of a pleasurable sadness. And if, in the remaining compositions which I shall introduce to you, there be more or less of a similar tone always apparent, let me remind you that (how or why we know not) this certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the higher manifestations of true Beauty. It is, nevertheless,

A feeling of sadness and longing  
 That is not akin to pain,  
 And resembles sorrow only  
 As the mist resembles the rain.

The taint of which I speak is clearly perceptible even  
 in a poem so full of brilliancy and spirit as the "Health"  
 of Edward Coote Pinkney :

I fill this cup to one made up  
 Of loveliness alone,  
 A woman, of her gentle sex  
 The seeming paragon ;  
 To whom the better elements  
 And kindly stars have given  
 A form so fair, that like the air,  
 'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,  
 Like those of morning birds,  
 And something more than melody  
 Dwells ever in her words ;  
 The coinage of her heart are they,  
 And from her lips each flows  
 As one may see the burden'd bee  
 Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,  
 The measures of her hours ;  
 Her feelings have the fragrancy,  
 The freshness of young flowers ;  
 And lovely passions, changing oft,  
 So fill her, she appears  
 The image of themselves by turns—  
 The idol of past years !

Of her bright face one glance will trace  
 A picture on the brain,  
 And of her voice in echoing hearts  
 A sound must long remain ;  
 But memory, such as mine of her,  
 So very much endears,  
 When death is nigh my latest sigh  
 Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill'd this cup to one made up  
 Of loveliness alone,  
 A woman, of her gentle sex  
 The seeming paragon—  
 Her health ! and would on earth there stood,  
 Some more of such a frame,  
 That life might be all poetry,  
 And weariness a name.

It was the misfortune of Mr. Pinkney to have been born too far south. Had he been a New Englander, it is probable that he would have been ranked as the first of American lyrists, by that magnanimous cabal which has so long controlled the destinies of American Letters, in conducting the thing called *The North American Review*. The poem just cited is especially beautiful; but the poetic elevation which it induces, we must refer chiefly to our sympathy in the poet's enthusiasm. We pardon his hyperboles for the evident earnestness with which they are uttered.

It was by no means my design, however, to expatiate upon the *merits* of what I should read you. These will necessarily speak for themselves. Boccacini, in his "Advertisements from Parnassus," tells us that Zoilus once presented Apollo a very caustic criticism upon a very admirable book:—whereupon the god asked him for the beauties of the work. He replied that he only busied himself about the errors. On hearing this, Apollo, handing him a sack of unwinnowed wheat, bade him pick out *all the chaff* for his reward.

Now this fable answers very well as a hit at the critics—but I am by no means sure that the god was in the right. I am by no means certain that the true limits of the critical duty are not grossly misunderstood. Excellence, in a poem especially, may be considered in the light of an axiom, which need only be properly *put*, to become self-evident. It is *not* excellence if it requires to be demonstrated as such:—and thus to point out too particularly the merits of a work of Art, is to admit that they are *not* merits altogether.

Among the "Melodies" of Thomas Moore, is one whose distinguished character, as a poem proper, seems to have been singularly left out of view. I allude to

his lines beginning—"Come, rest in this bosom." The intense energy of their expression is not surpassed by anything in Byron. There are two of the lines in which a sentiment is conveyed that embodies the *all in all* of the divine passion of Love—a sentiment which, perhaps, has found its echo in more, and in more passionate, human hearts than any other single sentiment ever embodied in words :

Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer,  
Though the herd have fled from thee, thy home is still here ;  
Here still is the smile that no cloud can o'ercast,  
And a heart and a hand all thy own to the last.

Oh ! what was love made for, if 'tis not the same  
Through joy and through torment, through glory and shame ?  
I know not, I ask not, if guilt's in that heart,  
I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.

Thou hast call'd me thy Angel in moments of bliss,  
And thy Angel I'll be, 'mid the horrors of this,—  
Through the furnace, unshrinking, thy steps to pursue,  
And shield thee, and save thee—or perish there too !

It has been the fashion of late days to deny Moore Imagination, while granting him Fancy—a distinction originating with Coleridge—than whom no man more fully comprehended the great powers of Moore. The fact is, that the fancy of this poet so far predominates over all his other faculties, and over the fancy of all other men, as to have induced, very naturally, the idea that he is fanciful *only*. But never was there a greater mistake. Never was a grosser wrong done the fame of a true poet. In the compass of the English language I can call to mind no poem more profoundly, more weirdly *imaginative* in the best sense, than the lines commencing "I would I were by that dim lake"—which are the composition of Thomas Moore. I regret that I am unable to remember them.

One of the noblest—and, speaking of Fancy, one of

the most singularly fanciful of modern poets, was Thomas Hood. His "Fair Ines" had always for me an inexpressible charm :

Oh, saw ye not fair Ines?  
She's gone into the West,  
To dazzle when the sun is down,  
And rob the world of rest :  
She took our daylight with her,  
The smiles that we love best,  
With morning blushes on her cheek,  
And pearls upon her breast.

Oh, turn again, fair Ines,  
Before the fall of night,  
For fear the moon should shine alone,  
And stars unrival'd bright ;  
And blessed will the lover be  
That walks beneath their light,  
And breathes the love against thy cheek  
I dare not even write !

Would I had been, fair Ines,  
That gallant cavalier,  
Who rode so gaily by thy side,  
And whisper'd thee so near !  
Were there no bonny dames at home,  
Or no true lovers here,  
That he should cross the seas to win  
The dearest of the dear ?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,  
Descend along the shore,  
With bands of noble gentlemen,  
And banners wav'd before ;  
And gentle youth and maidens gay,  
And snowy plumes they wore ;  
It would have been a beauteous dream,  
If it had been no more !

Alas, alas, fair Ines,  
She went away with song ;  
With Music waiting on her steps,  
And shoutings of the throng.  
But some were sad and felt no mirth,  
But only Music's wrong,  
In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,  
To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,  
 That vessel never bore  
 So fair a lady on its deck,  
 Nor danced so light before—  
 Alas for pleasure on the sea,  
 And sorrow on the shore !  
 The smile that blest one lover's heart  
 Has broken many more !

“The Haunted House,” by the same author, is one of the truest poems ever written, one of the *truest*, one of the most unexceptionable, one of the most thoroughly artistic, both in its theme and in its execution. It is, moreover, powerfully ideal—imaginative. I regret that its length renders it unsuitable for the purposes of this lecture. In place of it permit me to offer the universally appreciated “Bridge of Sighs :”

One more Unfortunate,  
 Weary of breath,  
 Rashly importunate  
 Gone to her death !

Take her up tenderly,  
 Lift her with care ;—  
 Fashion'd so tenderly,  
 Young and so fair !

Look at her garments  
 Clinging like cerements ;  
 Whilst the wave constantly  
 Drips from her clothing ;  
 Take her up instantly,  
 Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully ;  
 Think of her mournfully,  
 Gently and humanly ;  
 Not of the stains of her,  
 All that remains of her  
 Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny  
 Into her mutiny  
 Rash and undutiful ;  
 Past all dishonor,  
 Death has left on her  
 Only the beautiful.  
 Even God's providence  
 Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver  
 So far in the river,  
 With many a light  
 From window and casement  
 From garret to basement,  
 She stood, with amazement,  
 Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March  
 Made her tremble and shiver ;  
 But not the dark arch,  
 Or the black flowing river :  
 Mad from life's history,  
 Glad to death's mystery,  
 Swift to be hurl'd—  
 Anywhere, anywhere,  
 Out of the world !

In she plunged boldly,  
 No matter how coldly  
 The rough river ran—  
 Over the brink of it,  
 Picture it—think of it,  
 Dissolute Man !  
 Lave in it, drink of it,  
 Then, if you can !

Still, for all slips of hers,  
 One of Eve's family—  
 Wipe those poor lips of hers  
 Oozing so clammily,

Loop up her tresses  
Escaped from the comb,  
Her fair auburn tresses ;  
While wonderment guesses  
Where was her home ?

Who was her father ?  
Who was her mother ?  
Had she a sister ?  
Had she a brother ?  
Or was there a dearer one  
Still, and a nearer one  
Yet, than all other ?

Alas ! for the rarity  
Of Christian charity  
Under the sun !  
Oh ! it was pitiful !  
Near a whole city full,  
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,  
Fatherly, motherly,  
Feelings had changed :  
Love, by harsh evidence,  
Thrown from its eminence.  
Take her up tenderly,  
Lift her with care ;

Fashion'd so slenderly,  
Young and so fair !  
Ere her limbs frigidly  
Stiffen too rigidly,  
Decently—kindly—  
Smooth and compose them ;  
And her eyes, close them,  
Staring so blindly !

Dreadfully staring  
Through muddy impurity  
As when with the daring  
Last look of despairing  
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,  
Spurred by contumely,  
Cold inhumanity,  
Burning insanity,  
Into her rest—  
Cross her hands humbly,  
As if praying dumbly,  
Over her breast !  
Owning her weakness,  
Her evil behavior,  
And leaving, with meekness,  
Her sins to her Saviour !

The vigor of this poem is no less remarkable than its pathos. The versification, although carrying the fanciful to the very verge of the fantastic, is nevertheless admirably adapted to the wild insanity which is the thesis of the poem.

Among the minor poems of Lord Byron is one which has never received from the critics the praise which it undoubtedly deserves :

Though the day of my destiny's over,  
And the star of my fate hath declined,  
Thy soft heart refused to discover  
The faults which so many could find ;  
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,  
It shrunk not to share it with me,  
And the love which my spirit hath painted  
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,  
 The last smile which answers to mine,  
 I do not believe it beguiling,  
 Because it reminds me of thine ;  
 And when winds are at war with the ocean,  
 As the breasts I believed in with me,  
 If their billows excite an emotion,  
 It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shivered,  
 And its fragments are sunk in the wave,  
 Though I feel that my soul is delivered  
 To pain—it shall not be its slave.  
 There is many a pang to pursue me :  
 They may crush, but they shall not condemn—  
 They may torture, but shall not subdue me—  
 'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,  
 Though woman, thou didst not forsake,  
 Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,  
 Though slandered, thou never couldst shake—  
 Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,  
 Though parted, it was not to fly,  
 Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,  
 Nor mute that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,  
 Nor the war of the many with one—  
 If my soul was not fitted to prize it,  
 'Twas folly not sooner to shun :  
 And if dearly that error hath cost me,  
 And more than I once could foresee,  
 I have found that whatever it lost me,  
 It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,  
 Thus much I at least may recall,  
 It hath taught me that which I most cherished  
 Deserved to be dearest of all ;  
 In the desert a fountain is springing,  
 In the wide waste there still is a tree,  
 And a bird in the solitude singing,  
 Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

Although the rhythm here is one of the most difficult,  
 the versification could scarcely be improved. No nobler  
*theme* ever engaged the pen of poet. It is the soul-

elevating idea that no man can consider himself entitled to complain of Fate while in his adversity he still retains the unwavering love of woman.

From Alfred Tennyson, although in perfect sincerity I regard him as the noblest poet that ever lived, I have left myself time to cite only a very brief specimen. I call him, and *think* him, the noblest of poets, *not* because the impressions he produces are at *all* times the most profound—*not* because the poetical excitement which he induces is at *all* times the most intense—but because it is at all times the most ethereal—in other words, the most elevating and most pure. No poet is so little of the earth, earthy. What I am about to read is from his last long poem, “The Princess:”

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
In looking on the happy Autumn fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the underworld,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd  
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

Thus, although in a very cursory and imperfect manner, I have endeavored to convey to you my conception of the Poetic Principle. It has been my purpose

to suggest that, while this Principle itself is strictly and simply the Human Aspiration for Supernal Beauty, the manifestation of the Principle is always found in *an elevating excitement of the soul*, quite independent of that passion which is the intoxication of the Heart, or of that truth which is the satisfaction of the Reason. For in regard to passion, alas! its tendency is to degrade rather than to elevate the Soul. Love, on the contrary—Love—the truth, the divine Eros—the Uranian as distinguished from the Dionæan Venus—is unquestionably the purest and truest of all poetical themes. And in regard to Truth, if, to be sure, through the attainment of a truth we are led to perceive a harmony where none was apparent before, we experience at once the true poetical effect, but this effect is referable to the harmony alone, and not in the least degree to the truth which merely served to render the harmony manifest.

We shall reach, however, more immediately a distinct conception of what the true Poetry is, by mere reference to a few of the simple elements which induce in the Poet himself the true poetical effect. He recognizes the ambrosia which nourishes his soul in the bright orbs that shine in Heaven, in the volutes of the flower, in the clustering of low shrubberies, in the waving of the grain-fields, in the slanting of tall eastern trees, in the blue distance of mountains, in the grouping of clouds, in the twinkling of half-hidden brooks, in the gleaming of silver rivers, in the repose of sequestered lakes, in the star-mirroring depth of lonely wells. He perceives it in the songs of birds, in the harp of Æolus, in the sighing of the night-wind, in the repining voice of the forest, in the surf that complains to the shore, in the fresh breath of the woods, in the scent of the violet, in

the voluptuous perfume of the hyacinth, in the suggestive odor that comes to him at eventide from far distant undiscovered islands, over dim oceans, illimitable and unexplored. He owns it in all noble thoughts, in all unworldly motives, in all holy impulses, in all chivalrous, generous, and self-sacrificing deeds. He feels it in the beauty of woman, in the grace of her step, in the lustre of her eye, in the melody of her voice, in her soft laughter, in her sigh, in the harmony of the rustling of her robes. He deeply feels it in her winning endearments, in her burning enthusiasms, in her gentle charities, in her meek and devotional endurances, but above all, ah, far above all, he kneels to it, he worships it in the faith, in the purity, in the strength, in the altogether divine majesty of her *love*.

Let me conclude by the recitation of yet another brief poem, one very different in character from any that I have before quoted. It is by Motherwell, and is called "The Song of the Cavalier." With our modern and altogether rational ideas of the absurdity and impiety of warfare, we are not precisely in that frame of mind best adapted to sympathize with the sentiments, and thus to appreciate the real excellence of the poem. To do this fully we must identify ourselves in fancy with the soul of the old cavalier :

A steed ! a steed ! of matchless speede !  
 A sword of metal keene !  
 Al else to noble heartes is drosse —  
 Al else on earth is meane.  
 The neighynge of the war-horse prowde,  
 The rowleing of the drum,  
 The clangour of the trumpet lowde —  
 Be soundes from heaven that come.  
 And oh ! the thundering presse of knightes,  
 When as their war-cryes welle,  
 May tole from heaven an angel bright,  
 And rowse a fiend from hell.

Then mounte! then mounte, brave gallants, all,  
And don your helmes amaine;  
Deathe's couriers, Fame and Honour, call  
Us to the field againe.  
No shrewish tears shall fill your eye  
When the sword-hilt's in our hand,—  
Heart-whole we'll part, and no whit sighe  
For the fayrest of the land;  
Let piping swaine, and craven wight,  
Thus weepe and puling crye,  
Our business is like men to fight,  
And hero-like to die!

TO  
*THE NOBLEST OF HER SEX,—*  
TO THE AUTHOR OF  
“THE DRAMA OF EXILE,”—  
TO  
*MISS ELIZABETH BARRET BARRET,*  
OF ENGLAND,  
**I Dedicate this Volume,**  
WITH THE MOST ENTHUSIASTIC ADMIRATION AND  
WITH THE MOST SINCERE ESTEEM.

E. A. P.

1845.



## PREFACE.

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THESE trifles are collected and republished chiefly with a view to their redemption from the many improvements to which they have been subjected while going at random the "rounds of the press." I am naturally anxious that what I have written should circulate as I wrote it, if it circulate at all. In defence of my own taste, nevertheless, it is incumbent upon me to say that I think nothing in this volume of much value to the public, or very creditable to myself. Events not to be controlled have prevented me from making, at any time, any serious effort in what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of my choice. With me poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion; and the passions should be held in reverence: they must not—they cannot at will be excited, with an eye to the paltry compensations, or the more paltry commendations, of mankind.

E. A. P.

1845.



## POEMS OF LATER LIFE.

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### THE RAVEN.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered,  
weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten  
lore,  
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came  
a tapping,  
As of some one gently rapping—rapping at my cham-  
ber door.  
“’Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my  
chamber door—  
Only this, and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak  
December,  
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost  
upon the floor.  
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought  
to borrow  
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the  
lost Lenore—  
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels  
name Lenore—  
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple  
curtain  
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never  
felt before ;  
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood  
repeating  
“ ’Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber  
door—  
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber  
door ;—  
This it is, and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger ; hesitating then no  
longer,  
“ Sir,” said I, “ or Madam, truly your forgiveness I  
implore ;  
But the fact is, I was napping, and so gently you came  
rapping,  
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my  
chamber door,  
That I scarce was sure I heard you ”—here I opened  
wide the door :—

Darkness there, and nothing more.

✓ Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there  
wondering, fearing,  
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to  
dream before ;  
But the silence was unbroken, and the darkness gave  
no token,  
And the only word there spoken was the whispered  
word, “ Lenore ! ”  
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the  
word, “ Lenore ! ”

Merely this, and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me  
burning,

Soon I heard again a tapping somewhat louder than  
before.

"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my  
window lattice;

Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery  
explore—

Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery  
explore;—

"Tis the wind, and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt  
and flutter,

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of  
yore;

Not the least obeisance made he; not an instant stopped  
or stayed he;

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my  
chamber door—

Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber  
door—

Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into  
smiling,

By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it  
wore,

"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said,  
"art sure no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the  
Nightly shore—

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian  
shore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marveled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse  
so plainly,  
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy  
bore ;  
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human  
being  
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his  
chamber door—  
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his  
chamber door,  
With such name as “Nevermore.”

✓ But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke  
only  
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did  
outpour.  
Nothing further then he uttered—not a feather then  
he fluttered—  
Till I scarcely more than muttered, “Other friends have  
flown before—  
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my hopes have  
flown before.”

Then the bird said, “Nevermore.”

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly  
spoken,  
“Doubtless,” said I, “what it utters is its only stock  
and store,  
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful  
Disaster  
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one  
burden bore—  
Till the dirges of his Hope the melancholy burden  
bore

Of ‘Never—nevermore.’”

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into  
smiling,  
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and  
bust and door ;  
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to  
linking  
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of  
yore—  
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt and ominous  
bird of yore  
Meant in croaking “Nevermore.”

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable ex-  
pressing  
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my  
bosom’s core ;  
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease  
reclining  
On the cushion’s velvet lining that the lamp-light  
gloated o’er,  
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light  
gloating o’er,  
*She* shall press, ah, nevermore !

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from  
an unseen censer  
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the  
tufted floor.  
“Wretch,” I cried, “thy God hath lent thee—by these  
angels he hath sent thee  
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of  
Lenore !  
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost  
Lenore !”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if  
bird or devil!—

Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed  
thee here ashore,

Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land en-  
chanted—

On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I  
implore—

Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me,  
I implore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil—prophet still, if  
bird or devil!

By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we  
both adore—

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant  
Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name  
Lenore—

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name  
Lenore.”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I  
shrieked, upstarting—

“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s  
Plutonian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul  
hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above  
my door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form  
from off my door!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is  
sitting  
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber  
door ;  
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that  
is dreaming,  
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his  
shadow on the floor ;  
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating  
on the floor  
Shall be lifted—nevermore !

Published 1845.

## THE BELLS.

## I.

✓  
Hear the sledges with the bells—  
Silver bells!  
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!  
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,  
In the icy air of night!  
While the stars, that oversprinkle  
All the heavens, seem to twinkle  
With a crystalline delight;  
Keeping time, time, time,  
In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells  
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells—  
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

## II.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,  
Golden bells!  
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!  
Through the balmy air of night  
How they ring out their delight!  
From the molten golden-notes,  
And all in tune,  
What a liquid ditty floats  
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats  
On the moon!

Oh, from out the sounding cells,  
 What a gush of euphony voluminously wells !  
     How it swells !  
     How it dwells  
     On the future ! how it tells  
     Of the rapture that impels  
 To the swinging and the ringing  
     Of the bells, bells, bells,  
     Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
     Bells, bells, bells—  
 To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells !

## III.

✓ Hear the loud alarum bells—  
     Brazen bells !  
 What a tale of terror now their turbulency tells !  
     In the startled ear of night  
     How they scream out their affright !  
     Too much horrified to speak,  
     They can only shriek, shriek,  
         Out of tune,  
 In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,  
 In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire ;  
     Leaping higher, higher, higher,  
     With a desperate desire,  
     And a resolute endeavor  
     Now—now to sit or never,  
 By the side of the pale-faced moon.  
     Oh, the bells, bells, bells !  
     What a tale their terror tells  
         Of Despair !  
     How they clang, and clash, and roar !  
     What a horror they outpour  
 On the bosom of the palpitating air !  
 Vol. VI.—6.

Yet the ear it fully knows,  
 By the twanging  
 And the clanging,  
 How the danger ebbs and flows ;  
 Yet the ear distinctly tells,  
 In the jangling  
 And the wrangling,  
 How the danger sinks and swells,  
 By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the  
 bells—

Of the bells—  
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
 Bells, bells, bells—  
 In the clamor and the clangor of the bells !

## IV.

Hear the tolling of the bells—  
 Iron bells !  
 What a world of solemn thought their monody  
 compels !  
 In the silence of the night,  
 How we shiver with affright  
 At the melancholy menace of their tone !  
 For every sound that floats  
 From the rust within their throats  
 Is a groan.  
 And the people—ah, the people—  
 They that dwell up in the steeple,  
 All alone,  
 And who, tolling, tolling, tolling,  
 In that muffled monotone,  
 Feel a glory in so rolling  
 On the human heart a stone—

They are neither man nor woman—  
 They are neither brute nor human—

They are Ghouls :  
 And their king it is who tolls ;  
 And he rolls, rolls, rolls,

Rolls

A pæan from the bells !  
 And his merry bosom swells  
 With the pæan of the bells !

And he dances, and he yells ;  
 Keeping time, time, time,  
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the pæan of the bells—

Of the bells :

Keeping time, time, time,  
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the throbbing of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells—

To the sobbing of the bells ;  
 Keeping time, time, time,

As he knells, knells, knells,  
 In a happy Runic rhyme,

To the rolling of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells—

To the tolling of the bells,

Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,

Bells, bells, bells—

To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

pu-ē-ū  
 pē-ār  
 hymn  
 pæan

## ULALUME.

✓ The skies they were ashen and sober ;  
The leaves they were crispèd and sere—  
The leaves they were withering and sere ;  
It was night in the lonesome October  
Of my most immemorial year ;  
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
In the misty mid region of Weir—  
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,  
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic,  
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—  
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.  
These were days when my heart was volcanic  
As the scoriac rivers that roll—  
As the lavas that restlessly roll  
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek  
In the ultimate climes of the pole—  
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek  
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,  
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—  
Our memories were treacherous and sere—  
For we knew not the month was October,  
And we marked not the night of the year—  
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)

We noted not the dim lake of Auber—  
    (Though once we had journeyed down here)—  
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,  
    Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now as the night was senescent  
    And star-dials pointed to morn—  
    As the star-dials hinted of morn—  
At the end of our path a liquescent  
    And nebulous lustre was born,  
Out of which a miraculous crescent  
    Arose with a duplicate horn—  
Astarte's bediamonded crescent  
    Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian :  
    She rolls through an ether of sighs—  
    She revels in a region of sighs :  
She has seen that the tears are not dry on  
    These cheeks, where the worm never dies,  
And has come past the stars of the Lion  
    To point us the path to the skies—  
    To the Lethean peace of the skies—  
Come up, in despite of the Lion,  
    To shine on us with her bright eyes—  
Come up through the lair of the Lion,  
    With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,  
    Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust—  
    Her pallor I strangely mistrust :—  
Oh, hasten !—oh, let us not linger !  
    Oh, fly !—let us fly !—for we must."

In terror she spoke, letting sink her  
    Wings till they trailed in the dust—  
In agony sobbed, letting sink her  
    Plumes till they trailed in the dust—  
    Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:  
    Let us on by this tremulous light!  
    Let us bathe in this crystalline light!  
Its Sibyllic splendor is beaming  
    With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—  
    See!—it flickers up the sky through the night!  
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,  
    And be sure it will lead us aright—  
We safely may trust to a gleaming  
    That cannot but guide us aright,  
    Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,  
    And tempted her out of her gloom—  
    And conquered her scruples and gloom;  
And we passed to the end of the vista,  
    But were stopped by the door of a tomb—  
    By the door of a legended tomb;  
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,  
    On the door of this legended tomb?"  
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—  
    'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober  
    As the leaves that were crispèd and sere—  
    As the leaves that were withering and sere;  
And I cried—"It was surely October,  
    On *this* very night of last year.

That I journeyed—I journeyed down here—  
That I brought a dread burden down here !  
On this night of all nights in the year,  
Ah, what demon has tempted me here ?  
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber—  
This misty mid region of Weir—  
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,—  
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.”

1847.

## TO HELEN.

I saw thee once—once only—years ago :  
I must not say *how* many—but *not* many.  
It was a July midnight ; and from out  
A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring,  
Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,  
There fell a silvery-silken veil of light,  
With quietude, and sultriness and slumber,  
Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand  
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,  
Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe—  
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses  
That gave out, in return for the love-light,  
Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death—  
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses  
That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted  
By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.

Clad all in white, upon a violet bank  
I saw thee half-reclining ; while the moon  
Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,  
And on thine own, upturn'd—alas, in sorrow !

Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight—  
Was it not Fate (whose name is also Sorrow),  
That bade me pause before that garden-gate,  
To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses ?  
No footstep stirred : the hated world all slept,  
Save only thee and me—(O Heaven !—O God !

How my heart beats in coupling those two words!)—  
 Save only thee and me. I paused—I looked—  
 And in an instant all things disappeared.  
 (Ah, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!)  
 The pearly lustre of the moon went out:  
 The mossy banks and the meandering paths,  
 The happy flowers and the repining trees,  
 Were seen no more: the very roses' odors  
 Died in the arms of the adoring airs.  
 All—all expired save thee—save less than thou:  
 Save only the divine light in thine eyes—  
 Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes.  
 I saw but them—they were the world to me.  
 I saw but them—saw only them for hours—  
 Saw only them until the moon went down.  
 What wild heart-histories seemed to lie enwritten  
 Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres!  
 How dark a woe! yet how sublime a hope!  
 How silently serene a sea of pride!  
 How daring an ambition! yet how deep—  
 How fathomless a capacity for love!

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from sight,  
 Into a western couch of thunder-cloud;  
 And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing trees  
 Didst glide away. *Only thine eyes remained.*  
 They *would not* go—they never yet have gone.  
 Lighting my lonely pathway home that night,  
 They have not left me (as my hopes have) since.  
 They follow me—they lead me through the years—  
 They are my ministers—yet I their slave.  
 Their office is to illumine and enkindle—  
 My duty, *to be saved* by their bright light,  
 And purified in their electric fire,

And sanctified in their elysian fire.  
They fill my soul with beauty (which is Hope),  
And are far up in Heaven—the stars I kneel to  
In the sad, silent watches of my night ;  
While even in the meridian glare of day  
I see them still—two sweetly scintillant  
Venuses, unextinguished by the sun !

1848.

## ANNABEL LEE.

It was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea,  
That a maiden there lived whom you may know  
By the name of ANNABEL LEE ;  
And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,  
In this kingdom by the sea :  
But we loved with a love that was more than love—  
I and my ANNABEL LEE ;  
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven  
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,  
In this kingdom by the sea,  
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling  
My beautiful ANNABEL LEE ;  
So that her highborn kinsmen came  
And bore her away from me,  
To shut her up in a sepulchre  
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,  
Went envying her and me—  
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,  
In this kingdom by the sea)  
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,  
Chilling and killing my ANNABEL LEE.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love  
Of those who were older than we—  
Of many far wiser than we—  
And neither the angels in heaven above,  
Nor the demons down under the sea,  
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul  
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE ;

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams  
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE ;  
And the stars never rise but I see the bright eyes  
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE ;  
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side  
Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride,  
In her sepulchre there by the sea—  
In her tomb by the side of the sea.

Frances Sargent  
Osgood

## A VALENTINE.

For her this rhyme is penned, whose luminous eyes,  
 Brightly expressive as the twins of Leda,  
 Shall find her own sweet name, that, nestling lies  
 Upon the page, enwrapped from every reader.  
 Search narrowly the lines!—they hold a treasure  
 Divine—a talisman—an amulet  
 That **must** be worn *at heart*. Search well the measure—  
 The words—the syllables! Do not forget  
 The **trivialest** point, or you may lose your labor'  
 And yet there is in this no Gordian knot  
 Which one might not undo without a sabre,  
 If one could **merely** comprehend the plot.  
 Enwritten upon the leaf where now are peering  
 Eyes scintillating soul, there lie *perdus*  
 Three eloquent words oft uttered in the hearing  
 Of poets by poets—as the name is a poet's, too.  
 Its letters, although naturally lying  
 Like the knight Pinto—Mendez Ferdinando—  
 Still form a synonym for Truth—Cease trying!  
 You will not read the riddle, though you do the best  
 you *can* do.

1846.

[To discover the names in this and the following poem, read the first letter of the first line in connection with the second letter of the second line, the third letter of the third line, the fourth of the fourth, and so on to the end.]

## AN ENIGMA.

"Seldom we find," says Solomon Don Dunce,  
 "Half an idea in the profoundest sonnet.  
 Through all the flimsy things we see at once  
 As easily as through a Naples bonnet—  
 Trash of all trash!—how *can* a lady don it?  
 Yet heavier far than your Petrarchan stuff—  
 Owl-downy nonsense that the faintest puff  
 Twirls into trunk-paper the while you con it."  
 And, veritably, Sol is right enough.  
 The general tuckermanities are arrant  
 Bubbles—ephemeral and *so* transparent—  
 But this is, *now*—you may depend upon it—  
 Stable, opaque, immortal—all by dint  
 Of the dear names that lie concealed within't.

[See previous page.]

Sarah  
 Anna  
 Lewis

## TO MY MOTHER.

Because I feel that, in the Heavens above,  
The angels, whispering to one another,  
Can find, among their burning terms of love,  
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"  
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—  
You who are more than mother unto me,  
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you,  
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.  
My mother—my own mother, who died early,  
Was but the mother of myself; but you  
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,  
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew  
By that infinity with which my wife  
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

1849.

[The above was addressed to the poet's mother-in-law, Mrs. Clemm.—ED.]

## FOR ANNIE.

Thank Heaven! the crisis—  
The danger is past,  
And the lingering illness  
Is over at last—  
And the fever called "Living"  
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know,  
I am shorn of my strength.  
And no muscle I move  
As I lie at full length—  
But no matter!—I feel  
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly,  
Now in my bed,  
That any beholder  
Might fancy me dead—  
Might start at beholding me,  
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,  
The sighing and sobbing,  
Are quieted now,  
With that horrible throbbing  
At heart:—ah, that horrible,  
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—  
The pitiless pain—  
Have ceased, with the fever  
That maddened my brain—  
With the fever called “Living”  
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures  
That torture the worst  
Has abated—the terrible  
Torture of thirst,  
For the naphthaline river  
Of passion accurst:—  
I have drunk of a water  
That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,  
With a lullaby sound,  
From a spring but a very few  
Feet under ground—  
From a cavern not very far  
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never  
Be foolishly said,  
That my room it is gloomy  
And narrow my bed—  
For man never slept  
In a different bed,  
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber  
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit  
Here blandly reposes,

Forgetting, or never  
Regretting its roses—  
Its old agitations  
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly  
Lying, it fancies  
A holier odor  
About it, of pansies—  
A rosemary odor,  
Commingle with pansies—  
With rue and the beautiful  
Puritan pansies.

And so, it lies happily,  
Bathing in many  
A dream of the truth  
And the beauty of Annie—  
Drowned in a bath  
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,  
She fondly caressed,  
And then I fell gently  
To sleep on her breast—  
Deeply to sleep  
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,  
She covered me warm,  
And she prayed to the angels  
To keep me from harm—  
To the queen of the angels  
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,  
Now in my bed,  
(Knowing her love)  
That you fancy me dead—  
And I rest so contentedly,  
Now in my bed,  
(With her love at my breast)  
That you fancy me dead—  
That you shudder to look at me,  
Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter  
Than all of the many  
Stars in the sky,  
For it sparkles with Annie—  
It glows with the light  
Of the love of my Annie—  
With the thought of the light  
Of the eye of my Annie.

## TO F——.

Beloved ! amid the earnest woes  
That crowd around my earthly path—  
(Drear path, alas ! where grows  
Not even one lonely rose)—  
My soul at least a solace hath  
In dreams of thee, and therein knows  
An Eden of bland repose.

And thus thy memory is to me  
Like some enchanted far-off isle  
In some tumultuous sea—  
Some ocean throbbing far and free  
With storms—but where meanwhile  
Serenest skies continually  
Just o'er that one bright island smile.

TO FRANCES S. OSGOOD.

TO FRANCES S. OSGOOD.

Thou wouldst be loved?—then let thy heart  
 From its present pathway part not ;  
 Being everything which now thou art,  
 Be nothing which thou art not.  
 So with the world thy gentle ways,  
 Thy grace, thy more than beauty,  
 Shall be an endless theme of praise,  
 And love a simple duty.

1845.

## ELDORADO.

Gaily bedight,  
A gallant knight,  
In sunshine and in shadow,  
Had journeyed long,  
Singing a song,  
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—  
This knight so bold—  
And o'er his heart a shadow  
Fell as he found  
No spot of ground  
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength  
Failed him at length,  
He met a pilgrim shadow—  
“Shadow,” said he,  
“Where can it be—  
This land of Eldorado?”

“Over the Mountains  
Of the Moon,  
Down the Valley of the Shadow,  
Ride, boldly ride,”  
The shade replied,—  
“If you seek for Eldorado!”

## EULALIE.

I dwelt alone  
In a world of moan,  
And my soul was a stagnant tide,  
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing  
bride—  
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling  
bride.

Ah, less—less bright  
The stars of the night  
Than the eyes of the radiant girl !  
And never a flake  
That the vapor can make  
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,  
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded  
curl—  
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most humble  
and careless curl.

Now Doubt—now Pain  
Come never again,  
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,  
And all day long  
Shines, bright and strong,  
Astarté within the sky,  
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron  
eye—  
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

## A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM.

Take this kiss upon the brow !  
And, in parting from you now,  
Thus much let me avow—  
You are not wrong, who deem  
That my days have been a dream :  
Yet if hope has flown away  
In a night, or in a day,  
In a vision, or in none,  
Is it therefore the less *gone* ?  
*All* that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar  
Of a surf-tormented shore,  
And I hold within my hand  
Grains of the golden sand—  
How few ! yet how they creep  
Through my fingers to the deep,  
While I weep—while I weep !  
O God ! can I not grasp  
Them with a tighter clasp ?  
O God ! can I not save  
*One* from the pitiless wave ?  
Is *all* that we see or seem  
But a dream within a dream ?

## TO MARIE LOUISE (SHEW).

Of all who hail thy presence as the morning—  
Of all to whom thine absence is the night—  
The blotting utterly from out high heaven  
The sacred sun—of all who, weeping, bless thee  
Hourly for hope—for life—ah, above all,  
For the resurrection of deep buried faith  
In truth, in virtue, in humanity—  
Of all who, on despair's unhallowed bed  
Lying down to die, have suddenly arisen  
At thy soft-murmured words, "Let there be light!"  
At thy soft-murmured words that were fulfilled  
In the seraphic glancing of thine eyes—  
Of all who owe thee most, whose gratitude  
Nearest resembles worship,—oh, remember  
The truest, the most fervently devoted,  
And think that these weak lines are written by him—  
By him who, as he pens them, thrills to think  
His spirit is communing with an angel's.

## TO MARIE LOUISE (SHEW).

Not long ago, the writer of these lines,  
In the mad pride of intellectuality,  
Maintained "the power of words"—denied that ever  
A thought arose within the human brain  
Beyond the utterance of the human tongue;  
And now, as if in mockery of that boast,  
Two words—two foreign soft dissyllables—  
Italian tones, made only to be murmured  
By angels dreaming in the moonlit "dew  
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill,"—  
Have stirred from out the abysses of his heart,  
Unthoughtlike thoughts that are the souls of thought,  
Richer, far wilder, far diviner visions  
Than even the seraph harper, Israfil,  
(Who has "the sweetest voice of all God's creatures,")  
Could hope to utter. And I! my spells are broken.  
The pen falls powerless from my shivering hand.  
With thy dear name as text, though bidden by thee,  
I cannot write—I cannot speak or think—  
Alas, I cannot feel; for 'tis not feeling,  
This standing motionless upon the golden  
Threshold of the wide-open gate of dreams,  
Gazing, entranced, adown the gorgeous vista,  
And thrilling as I see, upon the right,  
Upon the left, and all the way along,  
Amid empurpled vapors, far away  
To where the prospect terminates—*thee only.*

THE CITY IN THE SEA.

Lo ! Death has reared himself a throne  
In a strange city lying alone  
Far down within the dim west,  
Where the good and the bad and the worst  
and the best

Have gone to their eternal rest.  
There shrines and palaces and towers  
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not !)  
Resemble nothing that is ours.  
Around, by lifting winds forgot,  
Resignedly beneath the sky  
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down  
On the long night-time of that town ;  
But light from out the lurid sea  
Streams up the turrets silently—  
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—  
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—  
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—  
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers  
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—  
Up many and many a marvelous shrine  
Whose wreathèd friezes interwine  
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky  
The melancholy waters lie.

So blend the turrets and shadows there  
That all seem pendulous in air,  
While from a proud tower in the town  
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves  
Yawn level with the luminous waves,  
But not the riches there that lie  
In each idol's diamond eye—  
Not the gaily-jeweled dead  
Tempt the waters from their bed ;  
For no ripples curl, alas !  
Along that wilderness of glass—  
No swellings tell that winds may be  
Upon some far-off happier sea—  
No heavings hint that winds have been  
On seas less hideously serene.

But lo, a stir is in the air !  
The wave—there is a movement there !  
As if the towers had thrust aside,  
In slightly sinking, the dull tide—  
As if their tops had feebly given  
A void within the filmy Heaven.  
The waves have now a redder glow—  
The hours are breathing faint and low—  
And when, amid no earthly moans,  
Down, down that town shall settle hence,  
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,  
Shall do it reverence.

## THE SLEEPER.

At midnight, in the month of June,  
I stand beneath the mystic moon.  
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,  
Exhales from out her golden rim,  
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,  
Upon the quiet mountain top,  
Steals drowsily and musically  
Into the universal valley.  
The rosemary nods upon the grave ;  
The lily lolls upon the wave ;  
Wrapping the fog about its breast,  
The ruin moulders into rest ;  
Looking like Lethe, see ! the lake  
A conscious slumber seems to take,  
And would not, for the world, awake.  
All Beauty sleeps !—and lo ! where lies  
(Her casement open to the skies)  
Irene, with her Destinies !

Oh, lady bright ! can it be right—  
This window open to the night ?  
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,  
Laughingly through the lattice drop—  
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,  
Flit through thy chamber in and out,  
And wave the curtain canopy  
So fitfully—so fearfully—  
Above the closed and fringed lid  
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,  
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,  
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall !

Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?  
Why and what art thou dreaming here?  
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,  
A wonder to these garden trees!  
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!  
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,  
And this all-solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,  
Which is enduring, so be deep!  
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!  
This chamber changed for one more holy,  
This bed for one more melancholy,  
I pray to God that she may lie  
Forever with unopened eye,  
While the dim sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,  
As it is lasting, so be deep;  
Soft may the worms about her creep!  
Far in the forest, dim and old,  
For her may some tall vault unfold—  
Some vault that oft hath flung its black  
And wingèd panels fluttering back,  
Triumphant o'er the crested palls  
Of her grand family funerals—  
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,  
Against whose portal she hath thrown  
In childhood many an idle stone—  
Some tomb from out whose sounding door  
She ne'er shall force an echo more,  
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!  
It was the dead who groaned within.

## BRIDAL BALLAD.

The ring is on my hand,  
And the wreath is on my brow ;  
Satins and jewels grand  
Are all at my command,  
And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well ;  
But, when first he breathed his vow,  
I felt my bosom swell—  
For the words rang as a knell,  
And the voice seemed *his* who fell  
In the battle down the dell,  
And who is happy now.

But he spoke to reassure me,  
And he kissed my pallid brow,  
While a reverie came o'er me,  
And to the churchyard bore me,  
And I sighed to him before me,  
Thinking him dead D'Elormie,  
“ Oh, I am happy now ! ”

And thus the words were spoken,  
And thus the plighted vow,  
And, though my faith be broken,  
And, though my heart be broken,  
Behold the golden token  
That *proves* me happy now !

Would God I could awaken !  
For I dream I know not how,  
And my soul is sorely shaken  
Lest an evil step be taken—  
Lest the dead who is forsaken  
May not be happy now.

POEMS OF MANHOOD.



## POEMS OF MANHOOD.

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### LENORE.

Ah, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown for  
ever!

Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian  
river.

And, Guy de Vere, hast *thou* no tear?—weep now or  
nevermore!

See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love,  
Lenore!

Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song  
be sung!—

An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so  
young—

A dirge for her, the doubly dead in that she died so  
young.

“Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated  
her for her pride,

And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her—  
that she died!

How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem  
how be sung

By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the slanderous tongue  
That did to death the innocence that died, and died  
so young?”

*Peccavimus* ; but rave not thus ! and let a Sabbath song  
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no wrong !  
The sweet Lenore hath “gone before,” with Hope,  
that flew beside,  
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have  
been thy bride—  
For her, the fair and *débonnaire*, that now so lowly lies,  
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes—  
The life still there, upon her hair—the death upon  
her eyes.

“Avaunt ! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I  
upraise,  
But waft the angel on her flight with a pæan of old  
days !  
Let no bell toll !—lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed  
mirth,  
Should catch the note, as it doth float up from the  
damnèd Earth.  
To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant  
ghost is riven—  
From Hell unto a high estate far up within the  
Heaven—  
From grief and groan to a golden throne beside the  
King of Heaven.”

## TO ONE IN PARADISE.

Thou wast that all to me, love,  
For which my soul did pine—  
A green isle in the sea, love,  
A fountain and a shrine,  
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,  
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last !  
Ah, starry Hope ! that didst arise  
But to be overcast !  
A voice from out the Future cries,  
“ On ! on ! ”—but o’er the Past  
(Dim gulf !) my spirit hovering lies  
Mute, motionless, aghast !

For, alas ! alas ! with me  
The light of Life is o’er !  
“ No more—no more—no more—”  
(Such language holds the solemn sea  
To the sands upon the shore)  
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,  
Or the stricken eagle soar !

And all my days are trances,  
And all my nightly dreams  
Are where thy dark eye glances,  
And where thy footstep gleams—  
In what ethereal dances,  
By what eternal streams.

## THE COLISEUM.

Type of the antique Rome ! Rich reliquary  
Of lofty contemplation left to Time  
By buried centuries of pomp and power !  
At length—at length—after so many days  
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst,  
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie,)  
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,  
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within  
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom and glory !

Vastness ! and Age ! and Memories of Eld !  
Silence ! and Desolation ! and dim Night !  
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—  
Oh spells more sure than e'er Judæan king  
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane !  
Oh charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee  
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars !

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls !  
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,  
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat !  
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair  
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle !  
Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,  
Glides, spectre-like unto his marble home,  
Lit by the wan light of the hornèd moon,  
The swift and silent lizard of the stones !

But stay ! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—  
These mouldering plinths—these sad and blackened  
shafts—

These vague entablatures—this crumbling frieze—  
These shattered cornices—this wreck—this ruin—  
These stones—alas ! these gray stones—are they all—  
All of the famed and the colossal left  
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me ?

“ Not all ”—the Echoes answer me—“ not all !

“ Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever

“ From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,

“ As melody from Memnon to the Sun.

“ We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule

“ With a despotic sway all giant minds.

“ We are not impotent—we pallid stones.

“ Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—

“ Not all the magic of our high renown—

“ Not all the wonder that encircles us—

“ Not all the mysteries that in us lie—

“ Not all the memories that hang upon

“ And cling around about us as a garment,

“ Clothing us in a robe of more than glory.”

## THE HAUNTED PALACE.

In the greenest of our valleys  
By good angels tenanted,  
Once a fair and stately palace—  
Radiant palace—reared its head.  
In the monarch Thought's dominion—  
It stood there!  
Never seraph spread a pinion  
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,  
On its roof did float and flow,  
(This—all this—was in the olden  
Time long ago),  
And every gentle air that dallied,  
In that sweet day,  
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,  
A wingèd odor went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,  
Through two luminous windows, saw  
Spirits moving musically,  
To a lute's well-tunèd law,  
Round about a throne where, sitting  
(Porphyrogene!)  
In state his glory well befitting,  
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing  
Was the fair palace door,  
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing  
And sparkling evermore,  
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty  
Was but to sing,  
In voices of surpassing beauty,  
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things in robes of sorrow,  
Assailed the monarch's high estate.  
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow  
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)

And round about his home the glory  
That blushed and bloomed,  
Is but a dim-remembered story  
Of the old time entombed.

And travelers, now, within that valley,  
Through the red-litten windows see  
Vast forms that move fantastically  
To a discordant melody,  
While, like a ghastly rapid river,  
Through the pale door  
A hideous throng rush out forever  
And laugh—but smile no more.

## THE CONQUEROR WORM.

Lo! 'tis a gala night/  
 Within the lonesome latter years  
 An angel throng, bewinged, bedight  
 In veils, and drowned in tears,  
 Sit in a theatre to see  
 A play of hopes and fears,  
 While the orchestra breathes fitfully  
 The music of the spheres.

*Mimes like "mimes"*  
 Mimes, in the form of God on high,  
 Mutter and mumble low,  
 And hither and thither fly—  
 Mere puppets they, who come and go  
 At bidding of vast formless things  
 That shift the scenery to and fro,  
 Flapping from out their condor wings  
 Invisible Wo!

That motley drama—oh, be sure  
 It shall not be forgot!  
 With its Phantom chased for evermore,  
 By a crowd that seize it not,  
 Through a circle that ever returneth in  
 To the self-same spot,  
 And much of Madness, and more of Sin,  
 And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout  
A crawling shape intrude !  
A blood-red thing that writhes from out  
The scenic solitude !  
It writhes !—it writhes !—with mortal pangs  
The mimes become its food,  
And the angels sob at vermin fangs  
In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all !  
And, over each quivering form,  
The curtain, a funeral pall,  
Comes down with the rush of a storm,  
And the angels, all pallid and wan,  
Uprising, unveiling, affirm  
That the play is the tragedy, “Man,”  
And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

*mimes - actors*

## SILENCE.

There are some qualities—some incorporate things,  
That have a double life, which thus is made  
A type of that twin entity which springs  
From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.  
There is a two-fold *Silence*—sea and shore—  
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,  
Newly with grass o'ergrown ; some solemn graces,  
Some human memories and tearful lore,  
Render him terrorless : his name's "No More."  
He is the corporate Silence : dread him not !  
No power hath he of evil in himself ;  
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot !)  
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,  
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod  
No foot of man), commend thyself to God !

1840.

## DREAMLAND.

By a route obscure and lonely,  
Haunted by ill angels only,  
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,  
On a black throne reigns upright,  
I have reached these lands but newly  
From an ultimate dim Thule—  
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,  
Out of SPACE—out of TIME.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,  
And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,  
With forms that no man can discover  
For the dews that drip all over ;  
Mountains toppling evermore  
Into seas without a shore ;  
Seas that restlessly aspire,  
Surging, unto skies of fire ;  
Lakes that endlessly outspread  
Their lone waters—lone and dead,  
Their still waters—still and chilly  
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread  
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—  
Their sad waters, sad and chilly  
With the snows of the lolling lily,—  
By the mountains—near the river  
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—

By the gray woods,—by the swamp  
Where the toad and the newt encamp,—  
By the dismal tarns and pools  
Where dwell the Ghouls,—  
By each spot the most unholy—  
In each nook most melancholy,—  
There the traveler meets aghast  
Sheeted Memories of the Past—  
Shrouded forms that start and sigh  
As they pass the wanderer by—  
White-robed forms of friends long given,  
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion  
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—  
For the spirit that walks in shadow  
'Tis—oh, 'tis an Eldorado!  
But the traveler, traveling through it,  
May not—dare not openly view it;  
Never its mysteries are exposed  
To the weak human eye unclosed;  
So wills its King, who hath forbid  
The uplifting of the fringed lid;  
And thus the sad Soul that here passes  
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,  
Haunted by ill angels only,  
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,  
On a black throne reigns upright,  
I have wandered home but newly  
From this ultimate dim Thule.

## TO ZANTE.

Fair isle, that from the fairest of all flowers,  
Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take!  
How many memories of what radiant hours  
At sight of thee and thine at once awake!  
How many scenes of what departed bliss!  
How many thoughts of what entombèd hopes!  
How many visions of a maiden that is  
No more—no more upon thy verdant slopes!  
*No more!* alas, that magical sad sound  
Transforming all! Thy charms shall please  
*no more—*  
Thy memory *no more!* Accursèd ground  
Henceforth I hold thy flower-enameled shore,  
O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante!  
“Isola d’oro! Fior di Levante!”

## HYMN.

At morn—at noon—at twilight dim—  
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn!  
In joy and woe—in good and ill—  
Mother of God, be with me still!  
When the hours flew brightly by,  
And not a cloud obscured the sky,  
My soul, lest it should truant be,  
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;  
Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast  
Darkly my Present and my Past,  
Let my Future radiant shine  
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.



## POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.\*

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### SONNET—TO SCIENCE.

Science! true daughter of Old Time thou art!  
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.  
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,  
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?  
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,  
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering  
To seek for treasure in the jeweled skies,  
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?  
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?  
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood  
To seek a shelter in some happier star?  
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,  
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me  
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

1829.

\*Private reasons—some of which have reference to the sin of plagiarism, and others to the date of Tennyson's first poems†—have induced me, after some hesitation, to republish these, the crude compositions of my earliest boyhood. They are printed *verbatim*—without alteration from the original edition—the date of which is too remote to be judiciously acknowledged.

E. A. P. (1845).

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† This refers to the accusation brought against Edgar Poe that he was a copyist of Tennyson.—Ed.

## AL AARAAF.\*

## PART I.

Oh! nothing earthly save the ray  
(Thrown back from flowers) of Beauty's eye,  
As in those gardens where the day  
Springs from the gems of Circassy—  
Oh! nothing earthly save the thrill  
Of melody in woodland rill—  
Or (music of the passion-hearted)  
Joy's voice so peacefully departed  
That like the murmur in the shell,  
Its echo dwelleth and will dwell—  
Oh, nothing of the dross of ours—  
Yet all the beauty—all the flowers  
That list our Love, and deck our bowers—  
Adorn yon world afar, afar—  
The wandering star.

'Twas a sweet time for Nesace—for there  
Her world lay lolling on the golden air,  
Near four bright suns—a temporary rest—  
An oasis in desert of the blest.  
Away—away—'mid seas of rays that roll  
Empyrean splendor o'er th' unchainèd soul—  
The soul that scarce (the billows are so dense)  
Can struggle to its destin'd eminence—  
To distant spheres, from time to time, she rode,  
And late to ours, the favor'd one of God—

\* A star was discovered by Tycho Brahe which appeared suddenly in the heavens—attained, in a few days, a brilliancy surpassing that of Jupiter—then as suddenly disappeared and has never been seen since.

But, now, the ruler of an anchor'd realm,  
 She throws aside the sceptre—leaves the helm,  
 And, amid incense and high spiritual hymns,  
 Laves in quadruple light her angel limbs.

Now happiest, loveliest in yon lovely Earth,  
 Whence sprang the “ Idea of Beauty ” into birth,  
 (Falling in wreaths thro’ many a startled star,  
 Like woman’s hair ’mid pearls, until, afar,  
 It lit on hills Achaian, and there dwelt)  
 She look’d into Infinity—and knelt.  
 Rich clouds, for canopies, about her curled—  
 Fit emblems of the model of her world—  
 Seen but in beauty—not impeding sight  
 Of other beauty glittering thro’ the light—  
 A wreath that twined each starry form around,  
 And all the opal’d air in color bound.

All hurriedly she knelt upon a bed  
 Of flowers : of lilies such as rear’d the head  
 \* On the fair Capo Deucato, and sprang  
 So eagerly around about to hang  
 Upon the flying footsteps of——deep pride—  
 † Of her who lov’d a mortal—and so died.  
 The Sephalica, budding with young bees,  
 Uprear’d its purple stem around her knees :  
 ‡ And gemmy flower, of Trebizond misnam’d—  
 Inmate of highest stars, where erst it sham’d  
 All other loveliness : its honeyed dew  
 (The fabled nectar that the heathen knew)  
 Deliriously sweet, was dropp’d from Heaven,  
 And fell on gardens of the unforgiven

\* On Santa Maura—olim Deucadia.

† Sappho.

‡ This flower is much noticed by Lewenhoeck and Tournefort. The bee, feeding upon its blossom, becomes intoxicated.

In Trebizond—and on a sunny flower  
 So like its own above that, to this hour,  
 It still remaineth, torturing the bee  
 With madness, and unwonted reverie :  
 In Heaven, and all its environs, the leaf  
 And blossom of the fairy plant, in grief  
 Disconsolate linger—grief that hangs her head,  
 Repenting follies that full long have fled,  
 Heaving her white breast to the balmy air,  
 Like guilty beauty, chasten'd, and more fair :  
 Nyctanthes too, as sacred as the light  
 She fears to perfume, perfuming the night :  
 \*And Clytia pondering between many a sun,  
 While pettish tears adown her petals run :  
 † And that aspiring flower that sprang on Earth—  
 And died, ere scarce exalted into birth,  
 Bursting its odorous heart in spirit to wing  
 Its way to Heaven, from garden of a king :  
 ‡ And Valisnerian lotus thither flown  
 From struggling with the waters of the Rhone :  
 § And thy most lovely purple perfume, Zante !  
 Isola d'oro !—Fior di Levante !

\* Clytia—The Chrysanthemum Peruvianum, or, to employ a better-known term, the turnsol—which turns continually towards the sun, covers itself, like Peru, the country from which it comes, with dewy clouds which cool and refresh its flowers during the most violent heat of the day.—*B. de St. Pierre.*

† There is cultivated in the king's garden at Paris, a species of serpentine aloes without prickles, whose large and beautiful flower exhales a strong odor of the vanilla during the time of its expansion, which is very short. It does not blow till towards the month of July—you then perceive it gradually open its petals—expand them—fade and die.—*St. Pierre.*

‡ There is found in the Rhone a beautiful lily of the Valisnerian kind. Its stem will stretch to the length of three or four feet—thus preserving its head above water in the swellings of the river.

§ The Hyacinth.

\*And the Nelumbo bud that floats forever  
 With Indian Cupid down the holy river—  
 Fair flowers, and fairy! to whose care is given  
 † To bear the Goddess' song, in odors, up to Heaven:

“Spirit! that dwellest where,  
 In the deep sky,  
 The terrible and fair,  
 In beauty vie!  
 Beyond the line of blue—  
 The boundary of the star  
 Which turneth at the view  
 Of thy barrier and thy bar—  
 Of the barrier overgone  
 By the comets who were cast  
 From their pride and from their throne  
 To be drudges till the last—  
 To be carriers of fire  
 (The red fire of their heart)  
 With speed that may not tire  
 And with pain that shall not part—  
 Who livest—*that* we know—  
 In Eternity—we feel—  
 But the shadow of whose brow  
 What spirit shall reveal?  
 Tho' the beings whom thy Nesace,  
 Thy messenger hath known  
 Have dream'd for thy Infinity  
 † A model of their own—

\* It is a fiction of the Indians that Cupid was first seen floating in one of these down the river Ganges—and that he still loves the cradle of his childhood.

† And golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the saints.—  
*Rev. St. John.*

‡ The Humanitarians held that God was to be understood as having really a human form.—*Vide Clarke's Sermons*, vol. 1, page 26, fol. edit.

The drift of Milton's argument leads him to employ language which

Thy will is done, O God !  
 The star hath ridden high  
 Thro' many a tempest, but she rode  
 Beneath thy burning eye ;  
 And here, in thought, to thee—  
 In thought that can alone  
 Ascend thy empire and so be  
 A partner of thy throne—  
 \* By winged Fantasy,  
 My embassy is given,  
 Till secrecy shall knowledge be  
 In the environs of Heaven."

She ceas'd—and buried then her burning cheek  
 Abash'd, amid the lilies there, to seek  
 A shelter from the fervor of His eye ;  
 For the stars trembled at the Deity.  
 She stirr'd not—breath'd not—for a voice was there  
 How solemnly pervading the calm air !

would appear, at first sight, to verge upon their doctrine ; but it will be seen immediately that he guards himself against the charge of having adopted one of the most ignorant errors of the dark ages of the Church.—*Dr. Sumner's Notes on Milton's Christian Doctrine.*

This opinion, in spite of many testimonies to the contrary, could never have been very general. Andeus, a Syrian, of Mesopotamia, was condemned for the opinion, as heretical. He lived in the beginning of the fourth century. His disciples were called Anthropomorphites.—*Vide Du Pin.*

Among Milton's minor poems are these lines :—

Dicite sacrorum præsidēs nemorum Deæ, etc.,  
 Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine  
 Natura solers finxit humanum genus ?  
 Eternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo,  
 Unusque et universus exemplar Dei.—And afterwards,  
 Non cui profundum Cæcitas lumen dedit  
 Diræus augur vidit hunc alto sinu, etc.

\* Seltsamen Tochter Jovis  
 Seinem Schosskinne  
 Der Phantasie.—*Goethe.*

A sound of silence on the startled ear  
 Which dreamy poets name "the music of the sphere."  
 Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call  
 "Silence"—which is the merest word of all.  
 All Nature speaks, and ev'n ideal things—  
 Flap shadowy sounds from visionary wings—  
 But ah! not so when, thus, in realms on high  
 The eternal voice of God is passing by,  
 And the red winds are withering in the sky!  
 \* "What tho' in worlds which sightless cycles run,  
 Link'd to a little system, and one sun—  
 Where all my love is folly and the crowd  
 Still think my terrors but the thunder cloud,  
 The storm, the earthquake, and the ocean-wrath—  
 (Ah! will they cross me in my angrier path?)  
 What tho' in worlds which own a single sun  
 The sands of Time grow dimmer as they run,  
 Yet thine is my resplendency, so given  
 To bear my secrets thro' the upper Heaven.  
 Leave tenantless thy crystal home, and fly,  
 With all thy train, athwart the moony sky—  
 † Apart—like fireflies in Sicilian night,  
 And wing to other worlds another light!  
 Divulge the secrets of thy embassy  
 To the proud orbs that twinkle—and so be  
 To ev'ry heart a barrier and a ban  
 Lest the stars totter in the guilt of man!"

Up rose the maiden in the yellow night,  
 The single-mooned eve!—on earth we plight

\* Sightless—too small to be seen.—*Legge*.

† I have often noticed a peculiar movement of the fireflies;—they will collect in a body and fly off, from a common centre, into innumerable radii.

Our faith to one love—and one moon adore—  
 The birthplace of young Beauty had no more.  
 As sprang that yellow star from downy hours  
 Up rose the maiden from her shrine of flowers,  
 And bent o'er sheeny mountain and dim plain  
 \*Her way—but left not yet her Therasæan reign.

## PART II.

High on a mountain of enamel'd head—  
 Such as the drowsy shepherd on his bed  
 Of giant pasturage lying at his ease,  
 Raising his heavy eyelid, starts and sees  
 With many a mutter'd "hope to be forgiven"  
 What time the moon is quadrated in Heaven—  
 Of rosy head, that towering far away  
 Into the sunlit ether, caught the ray  
 Of sunken suns at eve—at noon of night,  
 While the moon danc'd with the fair stranger light—  
 Uprear'd upon such height arose a pile  
 Of gorgeous columns on th' unburthen'd air,  
 Flashing from Parian marble that twin smile  
 Far down upon the wave that sparkled there,  
 And nursled the young mountain in its lair.  
 † Of molten stars their pavement, such as fall  
 Thro' the ebon air, besilvering the pall  
 Of their own dissolution, while they die—  
 Adorning then the dwellings of the sky.  
 A dome, by linked light from Heaven let down,  
 Sat gently on these columns as a crown—  
 A window of one circular diamond, there,

\*Therasæa, or Theræsea, the island mentioned by Seneca, which, in a moment, arose from the sea to the eyes of astonished mariners.

† Some star which, from the ruin'd roof  
 Of shak'd Olympus, by mischance did fall.—*Milton*.

Look'd out above into the purple air,  
 And rays from God shot down that meteor chain  
 And hallow'd all the beauty twice again,  
 Save when, between th' Empyrean and that ring,  
 Some eager spirit flapp'd his dusky wing.  
 But on the pillars Seraph eyes have seen  
 The dimness of this world : that grayish green  
 That Nature loves the best for Beauty's grave  
 Lurk'd in each cornice, round each architrave—  
 And every sculptur'd cherub thereabout  
 That from his marble dwelling peerèd out,  
 Seem'd earthly in the shadow of his niche—  
 Achaian statues in a world so rich ?  
 \* Friezes from Tadmor and Persepolis—  
 From Balbec, and the stilly, clear abyss  
 † Of beautiful Gomorrah ! oh, the wave  
 Is now upon thee—but too late to save !

Sound loves to revel in a summer night :  
 Witness the murmur of the gray twilight  
 ‡ That stole upon the ear, in Eyraco,  
 Of many a wild star-gazer long ago—

\* Voltaire, in speaking of Persepolis, says, "*Je connois bien l'admiration qu' inspirent ces ruines—mais un palais érigé au pied d'une chaîne de rochers stériles—peut-il être un chef d'œuvre des arts !*"

† "Oh, the wave"—Ula Deguisi is the Turkish appellation ; but on its own shores it is called Bahar Loth, or Almotanah. There were undoubtedly more than two cities engulfed in the "dead sea." In the valley of Siddim were five—Adrah, Zeboin, Zoar, Sodom and Gomorrah. Stephen of Byzantium mentions eight, and Strabo thirteen (engulfed)—but the last is out of all reason.

It is said [Tacitus, Strabo, Josephus, Daniel of St. Saba, Nau, Maundrell, Troilo, D'Arvieux] that after an excessive drought, the vestiges of columns, walls, etc., are seen above the surface. At any season such remains may be discovered by looking down into the transparent lake, and at such distances as would argue the existence of many settlements in the space now usurped by the "Asphaltites."

‡ Eyraco—Chaldea.

That stealeth ever on the ear of him  
 Who, musing, gazeth on the distance dim,  
 And sees the darkness coming as a cloud—  
 \* Is not its form—its voice—most palpable and loud?

But what is this?—it cometh—and it brings  
 A music with it—'tis the rush of wings—  
 A pause—and then a sweeping, fallen strain,  
 And Nesace is in her halls again.  
 From the wild energy of wanton haste  
     Her cheeks were flushing, and her lips apart;  
 And zone that clung around her gentle waist  
     Had burst beneath the heaving of her heart.  
 Within the centre of that hall to breathe  
 She paus'd and panted, Zanthé! all beneath,  
 The fairy light that kiss'd her golden hair  
 And long'd to rest, yet could but sparkle there!

† Young flowers were whispering in melody  
 To happy flowers that night—and tree to tree;  
 Fountains were gushing music as they fell  
 In many a starlit grove, or moonlit dell;  
 Yet silence came upon material things—  
 Fair flowers, bright waterfalls and angel wings—  
 And sound alone that from the spirit sprang  
 Bore burthen to the charm the maiden sang:

“'Neath bluebell or streamer—  
     Or tufted wild spray  
 That keeps, from the dreamer,

\* I have often thought I could distinctly hear the sound of the darkness  
 as it stole over the horizon.

† Fairies use flowers for their charactery.—*Merry Wives of Windsor*.

\* The moonbeam away—  
Bright beings! that ponder,  
With half closing eyes,  
On the stars which your wonder  
Hath drawn from the skies,  
Till they glance thro' the shade and  
Come down to your brow  
Like——eyes of the maiden  
Who calls on you now—  
Arise! from your dreaming  
In violet bowers,  
To duty beseeeming  
These star-litten hours—  
And shake from your tresses  
Encumber'd with dew  
The breath of those kisses  
That cumber them too—  
(Oh! how, without you, Love!  
Could angels be blest?)  
Those kisses of true love  
That lull'd ye to rest!  
Up!—shake from your wing  
Each hindering thing:  
The dew of the night—  
It would weigh down your flight;  
And true love caresses—  
Oh! leave them apart!  
They are light on the tresses,  
But lead on the heart.

\* In Scripture is this passage—"The sun shall not harm thee by day, nor the moon by night." It is perhaps not generally known that the moon, in Egypt, has the effect of producing blindness to those who sleep with the face exposed to its rays, to which circumstance the passage evidently alludes.

Ligeia ! Ligeia !  
 My beautiful one !  
 Whose harshest idea  
 Will to melody run,  
 Oh ! is it thy will  
 On the breezes to toss ?  
 Or, capriciously still,  
 \* Like the lone Albatross,  
 Incumbent on night  
 (As she on the air)  
 To keep watch with delight  
 On the harmony there ?

Ligeia ! wherever  
 Thy image may be,  
 No magic shall sever  
 Thy music from thee.  
 Thou hast bound many eyes  
 In a dreamy sleep—  
 But the strains still arise  
 Which *thy* vigilance keep—  
 The sound of the rain  
 Which leaps down to the flower,  
 And dances again  
 In the rhythm of the shower—  
 † The murmur that springs  
 From the growing of grass  
 Are the music of things—  
 But are model'd, alas !—  
 Away, then, my dearest,

\* The Albatross is said to sleep on the wing.

† I met with this idea in an old English tale, which I am now unable to obtain and quote from memory :—"The verie essence and, as it were, springe, heade and origine of all musiche is the verie pleasaunte sounde which the trees of the forest do make when they growe."

Oh ! hie thee away  
 To springs that lie clearest  
     Beneath the moon-ray—  
 To lone lake that smiles,  
     In its dream of deep rest,  
 At the many star-isles  
     That enjewel its breast—  
 Where wild flowers, creeping,  
     Have mingled their shade,  
 On its margin is sleeping  
     Full many a maid—  
 Some have left the cool glade, and  
     \* Have slept with the bee—  
 Arouse them, my maiden,  
     On moorland and lea—  
 Go ! breathe on their slumber,  
     All softly in ear,  
 The musical number  
     They slumber'd to hear—  
 For what can awaken  
     An angel so soon  
 Whose sleep hath been taken  
     Beneath the cold moon,  
 As the spell which no slumber  
     Of witchery may test,  
 The rhythmical number  
     Which lull'd him to rest ? ”

\* The wild bee will not sleep in the shade if there be moonlight.

The rhyme in this verse, as in one about sixty lines before, has an appearance of affectation. It is, however, imitated from Sir W. Scott, or rather from Claud Halero—in whose mouth I admired its effect :

Oh ! were there an island,  
     Tho' ever so wild,  
 Where woman might smile, and  
     No man be beguil'd, etc.

Spirits in wing, and angels to the view,  
 A thousand seraphs burst th' Empyrean thro',  
 Young dreams still hovering on their drowsy flight—  
 Seraphs in all but "Knowledge," the keen light  
 That fell, refracted, thro' thy bounds, afar  
 O Death! from eye of God upon that star:  
 Sweet was that error—sweeter still that death—  
 Sweet was that error—ev'n with *us* the breath  
 Of Science dims the mirror of our joy—  
 To them 'twere the Simoom, and would destroy—  
 For what (to them) availeth it to know  
 That Truth is Falsehood—or that Bliss is Woe?  
 Sweet was their death—with them to die was rife  
 With the last ecstasy of satiate life—  
 Beyond that death no immortality—  
 But sleep that pondereth and is not "to be"—  
 And there—oh! may my weary spirit dwell—  
 \* Apart from Heaven's Eternity—and yet how far from  
 Hell!

What guilty spirit, in what shrubby dim,  
 Heard not the stirring summons of that hymn?  
 But two: they fell: for Heaven no grace imparts  
 To those who hear not for their beating hearts.

\* With the Arabians there is a medium between Heaven and Hell, where men suffer no punishment, but yet do not attain that tranquil and even happiness which they suppose to be characteristic of heavenly enjoyment.

Un no rompido sueño—  
 Un día puro—allegre—libre  
 Quiera—

Libre de amor—de zelo  
 De odio—de esperanza—de rezelo.—*Luis Ponce de Leon.*

Sorrow is not excluded from "Al Aaraaf," but it is that sorrow which the living love to cherish for the dead, and which, in some minds, resembles the delirium of opium. The passionate excitement of Love and the buoyancy of spirit attendant upon intoxication are its less holy pleasures—the price of which, to those souls who make choice of "Al Aaraaf" as their residence after life, is final death and annihilation.

A maiden-angel and her seraph-lover—  
 Oh! where (and ye may seek the wide skies over)  
 Was Love, the blind, near sober Duty known?  
 \* Unguided Love hath fallen—'mid "tears of perfect  
 moan."

He was a goodly spirit—he who fell:  
 A wanderer by mossy-mantled well—  
 A gazer on the lights that shine above—  
 A dreamer in the moonbeam by his love:  
 What wonder? for each star is eye-like there,  
 And looks so sweetly down on Beauty's hair—  
 And they, and ev'ry mossy spring were holy  
 To his love-haunted heart and melancholy.  
 The night had found (to him a night of woe)  
 Upon a mountain crag, young Angelo—  
 Beetling it bends athwart the solemn sky,  
 And scowls on starry worlds that down beneath it lie.  
 Here sat he with his love—his dark eye bent  
 With eagle gaze along the firmament:  
 Now turn'd it upon her—but ever then  
 It trembled to the orb of EARTH again.

"Ianthe, dearest, see! how dim that ray,  
 How lovely 'tis to look so far away!  
 She seemed not thus upon that autumn eve  
 I left her gorgeous halls—nor mourned to leave.  
 That eve—that eve—I should remember well—  
 The sun-ray dropped in Lemnos with a spell  
 On th' Arabesque carving of a gilded hall  
 Wherein I sat, and on the draperied wall—  
 And on my eyelids—oh, the heavy light!

\* There be tears of perfect moan  
 Wept for thee in Helicon.—*Milton.*

How drowsily it weighed them into night !  
 On flowers, before, and mist, and love they ran  
 With Persian Saadi in his Gulistan :  
 But oh, that light !—I slumbered—Death, the while,  
 Stole o'er my senses in that lovely isle  
 So softly that no single silken hair  
 Awoke that slept—or knew that he was there.

“ The last spot of Earth's orb I trod upon  
 \* Was a proud temple called the Parthenon ;  
 More beauty clung around her columned wall  
 † Than even thy glowing bosom beats withal,  
 And when old Time my wing did disenthral  
 Thence sprang I—as the eagle from his tower,  
 And years I left behind me in an hour.  
 What time upon her airy bounds I hung  
 One half the garden of her globe was flung  
 Unrolling as a chart unto my view—  
 Tenantless cities of the desert too !  
 Ianthe, beauty crowded on me then,  
 And half I wished to be again of men.”

“ My Angelo ! and why of them to be ?  
 A brighter dwelling-place is here for thee—  
 And greener fields than in yon world above,  
 And woman's loveliness—and passionate love.”

“ But list, Ianthe ! when the air so soft  
 Failed, as my pennoned spirit leapt aloft, ‡  
 Perhaps my brain grew dizzy—but the world  
 I left so late was into chaos hurled,  
 Sprang from her station, on the winds apart,

\* It was entire in 1687—the most elevated spot in Athens.

† Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows

Than have the white breasts of the queen of love.—*Marlowe*.

‡ Pennon, for pinion.—*Milton*.

And rolled a flame, the fiery Heaven athwart.  
Methought, my sweet one, then I ceased to soar,  
And fell—not swiftly as I rose before,  
But with a downward, tremulous motion thro'  
Light, brazen rays, this golden star unto!  
Nor long the measure of my falling hours,  
For nearest of all stars was thine to ours—  
Dread star! that came, amid a night of mirth,  
A red Dædalion on the timid Earth.”

“ We came—and to thy Earth—but not to us  
Be given our Lady’s bidding to discuss :  
We came, my love ; around, above, below,  
Gay firefly of the night we come and go,  
Nor ask a reason save the angel-nod  
*She* grants to us as granted by her God—  
But, Angelo, than thine gray Time unfurled  
Never his fairy wing o’er fairer world !  
Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes  
Alone could see the phantom in the skies,  
When first Al Aaraaf knew her course to be  
Headlong thitherward o’er the starry sea—  
But when its glory swelled upon the sky,  
As glowing Beauty’s bust beneath man’s eye,  
We paused before the heritage of men,  
And thy star trembled—as doth Beauty then ! ”

Thus in discourse, the lovers whiled away  
The night that waned and waned and brought no day.  
They fell : for Heaven to them no hope imparts  
Who hear not for the beating of their hearts.

## TAMERLANE.

Kind solace in a dying hour !  
Such, father, is not (now) my theme—  
I will not madly deem that power  
Of Earth may shrive me of the sin  
Unearthly pride hath reveled in—  
I have no time to dote or dream :  
You call it hope—that fire of fire !  
It is but agony of desire :  
If I *can* hope—O God ! I can—  
Its fount is holier—more divine—  
I would not call thee fool, old man,  
But such is not a gift of thine.

Know thou the secret of a spirit  
Bowed from its wild pride into shame.  
O yearning heart ! I did inherit  
Thy withering portion with the fame,  
The searing glory which hath shone  
Amid the Jewels of my throne,  
Halo of Hell ! and with a pain  
Not Hell shall make me fear again—  
O craving heart ! for the lost flowers  
And sunshine of my summer hours !  
The undying voice of that dead time,  
With its interminable chime,  
Rings, in the spirit of a spell,  
Upon thy emptiness—a knell.

I have not always been as now :  
The fevered diadem on my brow  
    I claimed and won usurpingly—  
Hath not the same fierce heirdom given  
    Rome to the Cæsar—this to me ?  
    The heritage of a kingly mind,  
And a proud spirit which hath striven  
    Triumphantly with human kind.

On mountain soil I first drew life :  
    The mists of the Taglay have shed  
    Nightly their dews upon my head,  
And, I believe, the winged strife  
And tumult of the headlong air  
Have nestled in my very hair.

So late from Heaven—that dew—it fell  
    ('Mid dreams of an unholy night)  
Upon me with the touch of Hell,  
    While the red flashing of the light  
From clouds that hung, like banners, o'er,  
    Appeared to my half-closing eye  
    The pageantry of monarchy ;  
And the deep trumpet-thunder's roar  
    Came hurriedly upon me, telling  
    Of human battle, where my voice,  
    My own voice, silly child !—was swelling  
    (Oh ! how my spirit would rejoice,  
And leap within me at the cry)  
The battle-cry of Victory !

The rain came down upon my head  
    Unsheltered—and the heavy wind  
    Rendered me mad and deaf and blind.  
It was but man, I thought, who shed

Laurels upon me : and the rush—  
The torrent of the chilly air  
Gurgled within my ear the crush  
Of empires—with the captive's prayer—  
The hum of suitors—and the tone  
Of flattery 'round a sovereign's throne.

My passions, from that hapless hour,  
Usurped a tyranny which men  
Have deemed since I have reached to power,  
My innate nature—be it so :  
But, father, there lived one who, then,  
Then—in my boyhood—when their fire  
Burned with a still intenser glow  
(For passion must, with youth, expire)  
E'en *then* who knew this iron heart  
In woman's weakness had a part.

I have no words—alas !—to tell  
The loveliness of loving well !  
Nor would I now attempt to trace  
The more than beauty of a face  
Whose lineaments, upon my mind,  
Are—shadows on th' unstable wind :  
Thus I remember having dwelt  
Some page of early lore upon,  
With loitering eye, till I have felt  
The letters—with their meaning—melt  
To fantasies—with none.

Oh, she was worthy of all love !  
Love as in infancy was mine—  
'Twas such as angel minds above  
Might envy ; her young heart the shrine

On which my every hope and thought  
Were incense—then a goodly gift,  
For they were childish and upright—  
Pure—as her young example taught :  
Why did I leave it, and, adrift,  
Trust to the fire within, for light ?

We grew in age—and love—together—  
Roaming the forest and the wild ;  
My breast her shield in wintry weather—  
And, when the friendly sunshine smiled,  
And she would mark the opening skies,  
*I* saw no Heaven—but in her eyes.  
Young Love's first lesson is—the heart :  
For 'mid that sunshine and those smiles,  
When, from our little cares apart,  
And laughing at her girlish wiles,  
I'd throw me on her throbbing breast,  
And pour my spirit out in tears—  
There was no need to speak the rest—  
No need to quiet any fears  
Of her—who asked no reason why,  
But turned on me her quiet eye !

Yet *more* than worthy of the love  
My spirit struggled with and strove,  
When, on the mountain peak, alone,  
Ambition lent it a new tone—  
I had no being—but in thee :  
The world and all it did contain  
In the earth—the air—the sea—  
Its joy—its little lot of pain  
That was new pleasure—the ideal  
Dim vanities of dreams by night—

And dimmer nothings which were real—  
(Shadows—and a more shadowy light !)  
Parted upon their misty wings,  
    And, so, confusedly, became  
    Thine image and—a name—a name !  
Two separate—yet most intimate things.

I was ambitious—have you known  
    The passion, father? You have not :  
A cottager, I marked a throne  
Of half the world as all my own,  
    And murmured at such lowly lot—  
But, just like any other dream,  
    Upon the vapor of the dew  
My own had past, did not the beam  
    Of beauty which did while it thro'  
The minute—the hour—the day—oppress  
My mind with double loveliness.  
We walked together on the crown  
Of a high mountain which looked down  
Afar from its proud natural towers  
    Of rock and forest, on the hills—  
The dwindled hills ! begirt with bowers  
    And shouting with a thousand rills.

I spoke to her of power and pride,  
    But mystically—in such guise  
That she might deem it naught beside  
    The moment's converse ; in her eyes  
I read, perhaps too carelessly—  
    A mingled feeling with my own—  
The flush on her bright cheek to me  
    Seemed to become a queenly throne  
Too well that I should let it be  
    Light in the wilderness alone.

I wrapped myself in grandeur then,  
And donned a visionary crown—  
Yet it was not that Fantasy  
Had thrown her mantle over me—  
But that, among the rabble—men,  
Lion ambition is chained down—  
And crouches to a keeper's hand—  
Not so in deserts where the grand—  
The wild—the terrible conspire  
With their own breath to fan his fire.

Look 'round thee now on Samarcand!—  
Is she not queen of Earth? her pride  
Above all cities? in her hand  
Their destinies? in all beside  
Of glory which the world hath known  
Stands she not nobly and alone?  
Falling—her veriest stepping-stone  
Shall form the pedestal of a throne—  
And who her sovereign? Timour—he  
Whom the astonished people saw  
Striding o'er empires haughtily  
A diademed outlaw!

Oh, human love! thou spirit given,  
On Earth, of all we hope in Heaven!  
Which fall'st into the soul like rain  
Upon the Siroc-withered plain,  
And, failing in thy power to bless,  
But leav'st the heart a wilderness!  
Idea! which bindest life around  
With music of so strange a sound  
And beauty of so wild a birth—  
Farewell! for I have won the Earth.

When Hope, the eagle that towered, could see  
No cliff beyond him in the sky,  
His pinions were bent droopingly—  
And homeward turned his softened eye.  
'Twas sunset : when the sun will part  
There comes a sullenness of heart  
To him who still would look upon  
The glory of the summer sun.  
That soul will hate the ev'ning mist  
So often lovely, and will list  
To the sound of the coming darkness (known  
To those whose spirits hearken) as one  
Who, in a dream of night, *would* fly,  
But *cannot*, from a danger nigh.

What tho' the moon—tho' the white moon  
Shed all the splendor of her noon,  
*Her* smile is chilly—and *her* beam,  
In that time of dreariness, will seem  
(So like you gather in your breath)  
A portrait taken after death.

And boyhood is a summer sun  
Whose waning is the dreariest one—  
For all we live to know is known  
And all we seek to keep hath flown—  
Let life, then, as the day-flower, fall  
With the noonday beauty—which is all.  
I reached my home—my home no more—  
For all had flown who made it so.  
I passed from out its mossy door,  
And, tho' my tread was soft and low,  
A voice came from the threshold stone  
Of one whom I had earlier known—

Oh, I defy thee, Hell, to show  
On beds of fire that burn below,  
An humbler heart—a deeper woe.

Father, I firmly do believe—  
I *know*—for Death who comes for me  
From regions of the blest afar,  
Where there is nothing to deceive,  
Hath left his iron gate ajar,  
And rays of truth you cannot see  
Are flashing thro' Eternity——  
I do believe that Eblis hath  
A snare in every human path—  
Else how, when in the holy grove  
I wandered of the idol, Love,—  
Who daily scents his snowy wings  
With incense of burnt-offerings  
From the most unpolluted things,  
Whose pleasant bowers are yet so riven  
Above with trellised rays from Heaven.  
No mote may shun—no tiniest fly—  
The lightning of his eagle eye—  
How was it that Ambition crept,  
Unseen, amid the revels there,  
Till growing bold, he laughed and leapt  
In the tangles of Love's very hair?

## TO HELEN.

Helen, thy beauty is to me  
Like those Nicean barks of yore,  
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,  
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore  
To his own native shore,

On desperate seas long wont to roam.  
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,  
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home  
To the glory that was Greece,  
To the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo ! in yon brilliant window niche,  
How statue-like I see thee stand,  
The agate lamp within thy hand !  
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which  
Are Holy Land !

## THE VALLEY OF UNREST.

*Once* it smiled a silent dell  
Where the people did not dwell ;  
They had gone unto the wars,  
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars,  
Nightly, from their azure towers,  
To keep watch above the flowers,  
In the midst of which all day  
The red sunlight lazily lay.  
*Now* each visitor shall confess  
The sad valley's restlessness.  
Nothing there is motionless—  
Nothing save the airs that brood  
Over the magic solitude.  
Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees  
That palpitate like the chill seas  
Around the misty Hebrides !  
Ah ! by no wind those clouds are driven  
That rustle through the unquiet Heaven  
Unceasingly, from morn till even,  
Over the violets there that lie  
In myriad types of the human eye—  
Over the lilies there that wave  
And weep above a nameless grave !  
They wave :—from out their fragrant tops  
Eternal dews come down in drops.  
They weep :—from off their delicate stems  
Perennial tears descend in gems.

## ISRAFEL.\*

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell  
    "Whose heart-strings are a lute;"  
None sing so wildly well  
As the angel Israfel,  
And the giddy Stars (so legends tell),  
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell  
    Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above  
    In her highest noon,  
    The enamored Moon  
Blushes with love,  
    While, to listen, the red levin  
    (With the rapid Pleiads, even,  
    Which were seven),  
    Pauses in heaven.

And they say (the starry choir  
    And the other listening things)  
The Israfeli's fire  
Is owing to that lyre  
    By which he sits and sings—  
The trembling living wire  
Of those unusual strings.

\* And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—*Koran*.

But the skies that angel trod,  
Where deep thoughts are a duty—  
Where Love's a grown-up God—  
Where the Houri glances are  
Imbued with all the beauty  
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,  
Israfeli, who despisest  
An unimpassioned song ;  
To thee the laurels belong,  
Best bard, because the wisest !  
Merrily live and long !

The ecstasies above  
With thy burning measures suit—  
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,  
With the fervor of thy lute—  
Well may the stars be mute !

Yes, Heaven is thine ; but this  
Is a world of sweets and sour ;  
Our flowers are merely—flowers,  
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss  
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell  
Where Israfel  
Hath dwelt, and he where I,  
He might not sing so wildly well  
A mortal melody,  
While a bolder note than this might swell  
From my lyre within the sky.

TO ——.

I heed not that my earthly lot  
Hath—little of Earth in it—  
That years of love have been forgot  
In the hatred of a minute :—  
I mourn not that the desolate  
Are happier, sweet, than I,  
But that *you* sorrow for *my* fate  
Who am a passer by.

## TO ———.

The bowers whereat, in dreams, I see  
The wantonest singing birds,  
Are lips—and all thy melody  
Of lip-begotten words—

Thine eyes, in Heaven of heart enshrined  
Then desolately fall,  
O God! on my funereal mind  
Like starlight on a pall—

Thy heart—*thy* heart!—I wake and sigh,  
And sleep to dream till day  
Of the truth that gold can never buy—  
Of the baubles that it may.

1829.

## TO THE RIVER ———.

Fair river! in thy bright, clear flow  
Of crystal, wandering water,  
Thou art an emblem of the glow  
Of beauty—the unhidden heart—  
The playful maziess of art  
In old Alberto's daughter ;

But when within thy wave she looks—  
Which glistens then, and trembles—  
Why, then, the prettiest of brooks  
Her worshipper resembles ;  
For in his heart, as in thy stream,  
Her image deeply lies—  
His heart which trembles at the beam  
Of her soul-searching eyes.

## SONG.

I saw thee on thy bridal day—  
When a burning blush came o'er thee,  
Though happiness around thee lay,  
The world all love before thee :

And in thine eye a kindling light  
(Whatever it might be)  
Was all on Earth my aching sight  
Of Loveliness could see.

That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame—  
As such it well may pass—  
Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame  
In the breast of him, alas !

Who saw thee on that bridal day,  
When that deep blush *would* come o'er thee,  
Though happiness around thee lay,  
The world all love before thee.

## SPIRITS OF THE DEAD.

Thy soul shall find itself alone  
'Mid dark thoughts of the gray tombstone—  
Not one, of all the crowd, to pry  
Into thine hour of secrecy.  
Be silent in that solitude  
Which is not loneliness—for then  
The spirits of the dead who stood  
In life before thee are again  
In death around thee—and their will  
Shall overshadow thee : be still.  
The night—tho' clear—shall frown—  
And the stars shall not look down  
From their high thrones in the Heaven,  
With light like Hope to mortals given—  
But their red orbs, without beam,  
To thy weariness shall seem  
As a burning and a fever  
Which would cling to thee forever.  
Now are thoughts thou shalt not banish—  
Now are visions ne'er to vanish—  
From thy spirit shall they pass  
No more—like dewdrops from the grass.  
The breeze—the breath of God—is still  
And the mist upon the hill  
Shadowy—shadowy—yet unbroken,  
Is a symbol and a token—  
How it hangs upon the trees,  
A mystery of mysteries !

*A DREAM.*

In visions of the dark night  
I have dreamed of joy departed—  
But a waking dream of life and light  
Hath left me broken-hearted.

Ah! what is not a dream by day  
To him whose eyes are cast  
On things around him with a ray  
Turned back upon the past?

That holy dream—that holy dream,  
While all the world were chiding,  
Hath cheered me as a lovely beam,  
A lonely spirit guiding.

What though that light, thro' storm and night,  
So trembled from afar—  
What could there be more purely bright  
In Truth's day-star?

name of bird is  
here →  
Romance

## ROMANCE.

Romance, who loves to nod and sing,  
With drowsy head and folded wing,  
Among the green leaves as they shake  
Far down within some shadowy lake,  
To me a painted paroquet  
Hath been—a most familiar bird—  
Taught me my alphabet to say—  
To lisp my very earliest word  
While in the wild wood I did lie,  
A child—with a most knowing eye.

paroquet  
line

Of late, eternal Condor years  
So shake the very Heaven on high  
With tumult as they thunder by,  
I have no time for idle cares  
Though gazing on the unquiet sky.  
And when an hour with calmer wings  
Its down upon my spirit flings—  
That little time with lyre and rhyme  
To while away—forbidden things!  
My heart would feel to be a crime  
Unless it trembled with the strings.

1829.

I Romance compared w/ a paroquet —  
(superficial) rhyme, repetition

II Romance has passed,  
poetry has more profound significance  
speaker = elev. above simple rhyme

## FAIRYLAND.

Dim vales—and shadowy floods—  
And cloudy-looking woods,  
Whose forms we can't discover  
For the tears that drip all over  
Huge moons there wax and wane—  
Again—again—again—  
Every moment of the night—  
Forever changing places—  
And they put out the starlight  
With the breath from their pale faces.  
About twelve by the moon-dial  
One more filmy than the rest  
(A kind which, upon trial,  
They have found to be the best)  
Comes down—still down—and down  
With its centre on the crown  
Of a mountain's eminence,  
While its wide circumference  
In easy drapery falls  
Over hamlets, over halls,  
Wherever they may be—  
O'er the strange woods—o'er the sea—  
Over spirits on the wing—  
Over every drowsy thing—  
And buries them up quite  
In a labyrinth of light—  
And then, how deep!—oh deep!  
Is the passion of their sleep.

In the morning they arise,  
And their moony covering  
Is soaring in the skies,  
With the tempests as they toss,  
Like——almost anything—  
Or a yellow Albatross.  
They use that moon no more  
For the same end as before—  
Videlicet a tent—  
Which I think extravagant :  
Its atomies, however,  
Into a shower dissever,  
Of which those butterflies,  
Of Earth, who seek the skies,  
And so come down again  
(Never-contented things !)  
Have brought a specimen  
Upon their quivering wings.

## THE LAKE. TO —.

In spring of youth it was my lot  
To haunt of the wide world a spot  
The which I could not love the less—  
So lovely was the loneliness  
Of a wild lake, with black rock bound,  
And the tall pines that towered around.

But when the Night had thrown her pall  
Upon that spot, as upon all,  
And the mystic wind went by  
Murmuring in melody—  
Then—ah, then, I would awake  
To the terror of the lone lake.

Yet that terror was not fright,  
But a tremulous delight—  
A feeling not the jeweled mine  
Could teach or bribe me to define—  
Nor Love—although the Love were thine.

Death was in that poisonous wave,  
And in its gulf a fitting grave  
For him who thence could solace bring  
To his lone imagining—  
Whose solitary soul could make  
An Eden of that dim lake.

## EVENING STAR.

'Twas noontide of summer,  
And midtime of night,  
And stars, in their orbits,  
Shone pale, through the light  
Of the brighter, cold moon.  
'Mid planets her slaves,  
Herself in the Heavens,  
Her beam on the waves.

I gazed awhile  
On her cold smile ;  
Too cold—too cold for me—  
There passed, as a shroud,  
A fleecy cloud,  
And I turned away to thee,  
Proud Evening Star,  
In thy glory afar  
And dearer thy beam shall be ;  
For joy to my heart  
Is the proud part  
Thou bearest in Heaven at night,  
And more I admire  
Thy distant fire,  
Than that colder, lowly light.

## IMITATION.

A dark unfathomed tide  
Of interminable pride—  
A mystery, and a dream,  
Should my early life seem ;  
I say that dream was fraught  
With a wild and waking thought  
Of beings that have been,  
Which my spirit hath not seen,  
Had I let them pass me by,  
With a dreaming eye !  
Let none of earth inherit  
That vision on my spirit ;  
Those thoughts I would control,  
As a spell upon his soul :  
For that bright hope at last  
And that light time have past,  
And my worldly rest hath gone  
With a sigh as it passed on :  
I care not though it perish  
With a thought I then did cherish.

## "THE HAPPIEST DAY."

## I.

The happiest day—the happiest hour  
My seared and blighted heart hath known,  
The highest hope of pride and power,  
I feel hath flown.

## II.

Of power! said I? Yes! such I ween,  
But they have vanished long alas!  
The visions of my youth have been—  
But let them pass.

## III.

And pride, what have I now with thee?  
Another brow may even inherit  
The venom thou hast poured on me—  
Be still my spirit!

## IV.

The happiest day—the happiest hour  
Mine eyes shall see—have ever seen  
The brightest glance of pride and power  
I feel have been:

V.

But were that hope of pride and power  
Now offered with the pain  
Ev'n *then* I felt—that brightest hour  
I would not live again :

VI.

For on its wing was dark alloy  
And as it fluttered—fell  
An essence—powerful to destroy  
A soul that knew it well.

## TRANSLATION.

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HYMN TO  
ARISTOGEITON AND HARMODIUS.

## I.

Wreathed in myrtle, my sword I'll conceal,  
Like those champions devoted and brave,  
When they plunged in the tyrant their steel,  
And to Athens deliverance gave.

## II.

Beloved heroes! your deathless souls roam  
In the joy breathing isles of the blest;  
Where the mighty of old have their home—  
Where Achilles and Diomed rest.

## III.

In fresh myrtle my blade I'll entwine,  
Like Harmodius, the gallant and good,  
When he made at the tutelar shrine  
A libation of Tyranny's blood.

IV.

Ye deliverers of Athens from shame !  
Ye avengers of Liberty's wrongs !  
Endless ages shall cherish your fame,  
Embalmed in their echoing songs !

1827 ?



SCENES FROM POLITIAN.



# SCENES FROM POLITIAN :

AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA.

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## I.

ROME.—A Hall in a Palace. Alessandra and Castiglione.

*Alessandra.* Thou art sad, Castiglione.

*Castiglione.* Sad !—not I.

Oh, I'm the happiest, happiest man in Rome !

A few days more, thou knowest, my Alessandra,

Will make thee mine. Oh, I am very happy !

*Aless.* Methinks thou hast a singular way of showing  
Thy happiness—what ails thee, cousin of mine ?

Why didst thou sigh so deeply ?

*Cas.* Did I sigh ?

I was not conscious of it. It is a fashion,

A silly—a most silly fashion I have

When I am *very* happy. Did I sigh ? *(Sighing.)*

*Aless.* Thou didst. Thou art not well. Thou hast  
indulged

Too much of late, and I am vexed to see it.

Late hours and wine, Castiglione,—these

Will ruin thee ! thou art already altered—

Thy looks are haggard—nothing so wears away

The constitution as late hours and wine.

*Cas. (musing).* Nothing, fair cousin, nothing—not  
even deep sorrow—

Wears it away like evil hours and wine,  
I will amend.

*Aless.* Do it! I would have thee drop  
Thy riotous company, too—fellows low born  
Ill suit the like of old Di Broglio's heir  
And Alessandra's husband.

*Cas.* I will drop them.

*Aless.* Thou wilt—thou must. Attend thou also  
more

To thy dress and equipage—they are over plain  
For thy lofty rank and fashion—much depends  
Upon appearances.

*Cas.* I'll see to it.

*Aless.* Then see to it!—pay more attention, sir,  
To a becoming carriage—much thou wantest  
In dignity.

*Cas.* Much, much, oh, much I want  
In proper dignity.

*Aless. (haughtily).* Thou mockest me, sir:

*Cas. (abstractedly).* Sweet, gentle Lalage!

*Aless.* Heard I aright?

I speak to him—he speaks of Lalage!

Sir Count! (*places her hand on his shoulder*). What art  
thou dreaming? He's not well!

What ails thee, sir?

*Cas. (starting).* Cousin! fair cousin!—madam!

I crave thy pardon—indeed I am not well—

Your hand from off my shoulder, if you please.

This air is most oppressive!—Madam—the Duke!

*Enter DI BROGLIO.*

*Di Broglio.* My son, I've news for thee!—hey?—  
what's the matter? (*observing Alessandra*).  
I' the pouts? Kiss her, Castiglione! kiss her,  
You dog! and make it up, I say, this minute!  
I've news for you both. Politian is expected  
Hourly in Rome—Politian, Earl of Leicester!  
We'll have him at the wedding. 'Tis his first visit  
To the imperial city.

*Aless.* What! Politian  
Of Britain, Earl of Leicester?

*Di Brog.* The same, my love.  
We'll have him at the wedding. A man quite young  
In years, but gray in fame. I have not seen him,  
But Rumor speaks of him as of a prodigy  
Pre-eminent in arts, and arms, and wealth,  
And high descent. We'll have him at the wedding.

*Aless.* I have heard much of this Politian.  
Gay, volatile, and giddy—is he not,  
And little given to thinking?

*Di Brog.* Far from it, love.  
No branch, they say, of all philosophy  
So deep abstruse he has not mastered it.  
Learned as few are learned.

*Aless.* 'Tis very strange!  
I have known men have seen Politian  
And sought his company. They speak of him  
As of one who entered madly into life,  
Drinking the cup of pleasure to the dregs.

*Cas.* Ridiculous! Now *I* have seen Politian  
And know him well—nor learned nor mirthful he.

He is a dreamer, and a man shut out  
From common passions.

*Di Brog.* Children, we disagree.  
Let us go forth and taste the fragrant air  
Of the garden. Did I dream, or did I hear  
Politian was a *melancholy* man? *(Exeunt.)*

## II.

ROME.—A Lady's apartment, with a window open and looking into a garden. LALAGE, in deep mourning, reading at a table on which lie some books and a hand-mirror. In the background JACINTA (a servant maid) leans carelessly upon a chair.

*Lal.* Jacinta! is it thou?

*Jac. (pertly).* Yes, Ma'am, I'm here.

*Lal.* I did not know, Jacinta, you were in waiting.  
Sit down!—let not my presence trouble you—  
Sit down!—for I am humble, most humble.

*Jac. (aside).* 'Tis time.

*(Jacinta seats herself in a sidelong manner upon the chair, resting her elbows upon the back, and regarding her mistress with a contemptuous look. Lalage continues to read.)*

*Lal.* "It in another climate, so he said,  
"Bore a bright golden flower, but not i' this soil!"

*(Pauses—turns over some leaves, and resumes.)*

"No lingering winters there, nor snow, nor shower—

"But Ocean ever to refresh mankind

"Breathes the shrill spirit of the western wind."

Oh, beautiful!—most beautiful!—how like

To what my fevered soul doth dream of Heaven!

Oh, happy land! *(pauses.)* She died!—the maiden died!

Oh, still more happy maiden who couldst die!

Jacinta!

*(Jacinta returns no answer, and Lalage presently resumes.)*

Again!—a similar tale  
Told of a beauteous dame beyond the sea!  
Thus speaketh one Ferdinand in the words of the play—  
"She died full young"—one Bossola answers him—  
"I think not so—her infelicity  
"Seemed to have years too many"—Ah! luckless lady!  
Jacinta! (*Still no answer.*)

Here's a far sterner story—  
But like—oh, very like in its despair—  
Of that Egyptian queen, winning so easily  
A thousand hearts—losing at length her own.  
She died. Thus endeth the history—and her maids  
Lean over her and weep—two gentle maids  
With gentle names—Eiros and Charmion!  
Rainbow and Dove!—Jacinta!

*Jac.* (*pettishly*). Madam, what is it?

*Lal.* Wilt thou, my good Jacinta, be so kind  
As go down in the library and bring me  
The Holy Evangelists.

*Jac.* Pshaw! (*Exit.*)

*Lal.* If there be balm  
For the wounded spirit in Gilead, it is there!  
Dew in the night time of my bitter trouble  
Will there be found—"dew sweeter far than that  
Which hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill."

(*Re-enter Jacinta, and throws a volume on the table.*)

There, Ma'am, 's the book. Indeed she is very trouble-  
some. (*Aside.*)

*Lal.* (*astonished.*) What didst thou say, Jacinta?

Have I done aught  
To grieve thee or to vex thee?—I am sorry.  
For thou hast served me long and ever been  
Trustworthy and respectful. (*Resumes her reading.*)

*Jac.* I can't believe  
 She has any more jewels—no—no—she gave me all.  
(*Aside.*)

*Lal.* What didst thou say, Jacinta? Now I bethink  
 me  
 Thou hast not spoken lately of thy wedding.  
 How fares good Ugo?—and when is it to be?  
 Can I do aught?—is there no further aid  
 Thou needest, Jacinta?

*Jac.* Is there no *further* aid!  
 That's meant for me. (*Aside.*) I'm sure, Madam, you  
 need not

Be always throwing those jewels in my teeth.

*Lal.* Jewels! Jacinta,—now indeed, Jacinta,  
 I thought not of the jewels.

*Jac.* Oh! perhaps not!  
 But then I might have sworn it. After all,  
 There's Ugo says the ring is only paste,  
 For he's sure the Count Castiglione never  
 Would have given a real diamond to such as you;  
 And at the best I'm certain, Madam, you cannot  
 Have use for jewels *now*. But I might have sworn it.

(*Exit.*)

(*Lalage bursts into tears and leans her head upon  
 the table—after a short pause raises it.*)

*Lal.* Poor Lalage!—and is it come to this?  
 Thy servant maid!—but courage!—'tis but a viper  
 Whom thou hast cherished to sting thee to the soul!

(*Taking up the mirror.*)

Ha! here at least's a friend—too much a friend  
 In earlier days—a friend will not deceive thee.  
 Fair mirror and true! now tell me (for thou canst)  
 A tale—a pretty tale—and heed thou not  
 Though it be rife with woe. It answers me.

It speaks of sunken eyes and wasted cheeks,  
 And Beauty long deceased—remembers me  
 Of Joy departed—Hope, the Seraph Hope,  
 Inurn'd and entomb'd!—now, in a tone  
 Low, sad and solemn, but most audible,  
 Whispers of early grave untimely yawning  
 For ruined maid. Fair mirror and true!—thou liest not!  
*Thou* hast no end to gain—no heart to break—  
 Castiglione lied who said he loved—  
 Thou true—he false!—false!—false!

*(While she speaks, a Monk enters her apartment  
 and approaches unobserved.)*

*Monk.* Refuge thou hast,  
 Sweet daughter! in Heaven. Think of eternal things!  
 Give up thy soul to penitence, and pray!

*Lal. (arising hurriedly).* I cannot pray!—My soul  
 is at war with God!

The frightful sounds of merriment below  
 Disturb my senses—go! I cannot pray—  
 The sweet airs from the garden worry me!  
 Thy presence grieves me—go!—thy priestly raiment  
 Fills me with dread—thy ebony crucifix  
 With horror and awe!

*Monk.* Think of thy precious soul!

*Lal.* Think of my early days!—think of my father  
 And mother in Heaven! think of our quiet home,  
 And the rivulet that ran before the door!  
 Think of my little sisters!—think of them!  
 And think of me!—think of my trusting love  
 And confidence—his vows—my ruin—think—think  
 Of my unspeakable misery!—begone!  
 Yet stay! yet stay!—what was it thou saidst of prayer  
 And penitence? Didst thou not speak of faith  
 And vows before the throne?

*Monk.* I did.

*Lal.* 'Tis well.

There is a vow 'twere fitting should be made—  
A sacred vow, imperative and urgent,  
A solemn vow!

*Monk.* Daughter, this zeal is well!

*Lal.* Father, this zeal is anything but well!  
Hast thou a crucifix fit for this thing?

A crucifix whereon to register

This sacred vow? (*He hands her his own.*)

Not that—Oh! no!—no!—no! (*Shuddering.*)

Not that! Not that!—I tell thee, holy man,  
Thy raiments and thy ebony cross affright me!  
Stand back! I have a crucifix myself,—  
I have a crucifix! Methinks 'twere fitting  
The deed—the vow—the symbol of the deed—  
And the deed's register should tally, father!

(*Draws a cross-handled dagger and raises it  
on high.*)

Behold the cross wherewith a vow like mine  
Is written in Heaven!

*Monk.* Thy words are madness, daughter,  
And speak a purpose unholy—thy lips are livid—  
Thine eyes are wild—tempt not the wrath divine!  
Pause ere too late!—oh, be not—be not rash!  
Swear not the oath—oh, swear it not!

*Lal.* 'Tis sworn!

## III.

An apartment in a Palace. POLITIAN and BALDAZZAR.

*Baldazzar.* Arouse thee now, Politian!  
Thou must not—nay indeed, indeed, thou shalt not  
Give way unto these humors. Be thyself!  
Shake off the idle fancies that beset thee,  
And live, for now thou diest!

*Politian.* Not so, Baldazzar!  
*Surely* I live.

*Bal.* Politian, it doth grieve me  
To see thee thus!

*Pol.* Baldazzar, it doth grieve me  
To give thee cause for grief, my honored friend.  
Command me, sir! what wouldst thou have me do?  
At thy behest I will shake off that nature  
Which from my forefathers I did inherit,  
Which with my mother's milk I did imbibe,  
And be no more Politian, but some other.  
Command me, sir!

*Bal.* To the field then—to the field—  
To the senate or the field.

*Pol.* Alas! alas!  
There is an imp would follow me even there!  
There is an imp *hath* followed me even there!  
There is——what voice was that?

*Bal.* I heard it not.  
I heard not any voice except thine own,  
And the echo of thine own.

*Pol.* Then I but dreamed.

*Bal.* Give not thy soul to dreams! the camp—the  
court

Befit thee—Fame awaits thee—Glory calls—  
And her the trumpet-tongued thou wilt not hear  
In hearkening to imaginary sounds  
And phantom voices.

*Pol.* It is a phantom voice!  
Didst thou not hear it *then*?

*Bal.* I heard it not.

*Pol.* Thou heardst it not!—Baldazzar, speak no  
more

To me, Politian, of thy camps and courts.  
Oh! I am sick, sick, sick, even unto death,  
Of the hollow and high-sounding vanities  
Of the populous Earth! Bear with me yet awhile!  
We have been boys together—school-fellows—  
And now are friends—yet shall not be so long—  
For in the eternal city thou shalt do me  
A kind and gentle office, and a Power—  
A Power august, benignant and supreme—  
Shall then absolve thee of all further duties  
Unto thy friend.

*Bal.* Thou speakest a fearful riddle  
I *will* not understand.

*Pol.* Yet now as Fate  
Approaches, and the Hours are breathing low,  
The sands of Time are changed to golden grains,  
And dazzle me, Baldazzar. Alas! alas!  
I *cannot* die, having within my heart  
So keen a relish for the beautiful  
As hath been kindled within it. Methinks the air  
Is balmier now than it was wont to be—  
Rich melodies are floating in the winds—  
A rarer loveliness bedecks the earth—

And with a holier lustre the quiet moon  
Sitteth in Heaven.—Hist! hist! thou canst not say  
Thou hearest not *now*, Baldazzar?

*Bal.* Indeed, I hear not.

*Pol.* Not hear it!—listen now—listen!—the faintest  
sound

And yet the sweetest that ear ever heard!  
A lady's voice!—and sorrow in the tone!  
Baldazzar, it oppresses me like a spell!  
Again!—again!—how solemnly it falls  
Into my heart of hearts! that eloquent voice  
Surely I never heard—yet it were well  
Had I *but* heard it with its thrilling tones  
In earlier days!

*Bal.* I myself hear it now.

Be still!—the voice, if I mistake not greatly,  
Proceeds from yonder lattice—which you may see  
Very plainly through the window—it belongs,  
Does it not? unto this palace of the Duke.  
The singer is undoubtedly beneath  
The roof of his Excellency—and perhaps  
Is even that Alessandra of whom he spoke  
As the betrothed of Castiglione,  
His son and heir.

*Pol.* Be still!—it comes again!

*Voice (very faintly).* “And is thy heart so strong  
As for to leave me thus,  
That have loved thee so long,  
In wealth and woe among?  
And is thy heart so strong  
As for to leave me thus?”

Say nay! say nay!”\*

*Bal.* The song is English, and I oft have heard it

\* By Sir Thomas Wyatt.—Ed.

In merry England—never so plaintively—  
Hist! hist! it comes again!

*Voice (more loudly).* “Is it so strong  
As for to leave me thus  
That have loved thee so long  
In wealth and woe among?  
And is thy heart so strong  
As for to leave me thus?

Say nay! say nay!”

*Bal.* ’Tis hushed and all is still!

*Pol.* All *is not* still.

*Bal.* Let us go down.

*Pol.* Go down, Baldazzar, go!

*Bal.* The hour is growing late—the Duke awaits us—  
Thy presence is expected in the hall  
Below. What ails thee, Earl Politian?

*Voice (distinctly).* “Who have loved thee so long,  
In wealth and woe among,  
And is thy heart so strong?

Say nay! say nay!”

*Bal.* Let us descend!—’tis time. Politian, give  
These fancies to the wind. Remember, pray,  
Your bearing lately savored much of rudeness  
Unto the Duke. Arouse thee! and remember!

*Pol.* Remember! I do. Lead on! I *do* remember.  
(*Going.*)

Let us descend. Believe me I would give,  
Freely would give the broad lands of my earldom  
To look upon the face hidden by yon lattice—  
“To gaze upon that veiled face, and hear  
Once more that silent tongue.”

*Bal.* Let me beg you, sir,  
Descend with me—the Duke may be offended.  
Let us go down, I pray you.

*Voice (loudly).* Say nay!—Say nay!

*Pol. (aside).* 'Tis strange!—'tis very strange—me-thought the voice

Chimed in with my desires and bade me stay!

*(Approaching the window.)*

Sweet voice! I heed thee, and will surely stay.

Now be this Fancy, by Heaven, or be it Fate,

Still will I not descend. Baldazzar, make

Apology unto the Duke for me;

I go not down to-night.

*Bal.* Your lordship's pleasure  
Shall be attended to. Good-night, Politian.

*Pol.* Good-night, my friend, good-night.

#### IV.

The Gardens of a Palace—Moonlight. LALAGE and POLITIAN.

*Lalage.* And dost thou speak of love  
To me, Politian?—dost thou speak of love  
To Lalage?—ah, woe—ah, woe is me!  
This mockery is most cruel—most cruel indeed!

*Politian.* Weep not! oh, sob not thus!—thy bitter  
tears

Will madden me. Oh, mourn not, Lalage—  
Be comforted! I know—I know it all,  
And *still* I speak of love. Look at me, brightest  
And beautiful Lalage!—turn here thine eyes!  
Thou askest me if I could speak of love,  
Knowing what I know, and seeing what I have seen.  
Thou askest me that—and thus I answer thee—  
Thus on my bended knee I answer thee. *(Kneeling.)*  
Sweet Lalage, *I love thee—love thee—love thee;*

Thro' good and ill—thro' weal and woe *I love thee*.  
 Not mother, with her first-born on her knee,  
 Thrills with intenser love than I for thee.  
 Not on God's altar, in any time or clime,  
 Burned there a holier fire than burneth now  
 Within my spirit for *thee*. And do I love? (*Arising.*)  
 Even for thy woes I love thee—even for thy woes—  
 Thy beauty and thy woes.

*Lal.* Alas, proud Earl,  
 Thou dost forget thyself, remembering me!  
 How, in thy father's halls, among the maidens  
 Pure and reproachless of thy princely line,  
 Could the dishonored Lalage abide?  
 Thy wife, and with a tainted memory—  
 My seared and blighted name, how would it tally  
 With the ancestral honors of thy house,  
 And with thy glory?

*Pol.* Speak not to me of glory!  
 I hate—I loathe the name; I do abhor  
 The unsatisfactory and ideal thing.  
 Art thou not Lalage, and I Politian?  
 Do I not love—art thou not beautiful—  
 What need we more? Ha! glory!—now speak not  
 of it:

By all I hold most sacred and most solemn—  
 By all my wishes now—my fears hereafter—  
 By all I scorn on earth and hope in heaven—  
 There is no deed I would more glory in,  
 Than in thy cause to scoff at this same glory  
 And trample it under foot. What matters it—  
 What matters it, my fairest and my best,  
 That we go down unhonored and forgotten  
 Into the dust—so we descend together.  
 Descend together—and then—and then perchance—

*Lal.* Why dost thou pause, Politian?

*Pol.* And then perchance

*Arise together, Lalage, and roam*

The starry and quiet dwellings of the blest,

And still——

*Lal.* Why dost thou pause, Politian?

*Pol.* And still *together—together.*

*Lal.* Now, Earl of Leicester!

Thou *lovest* me, and in my heart of hearts

I feel thou lovest me truly.

*Pol.* O Lalage! (*throwing himself upon his knee*).  
And lovest thou *me*?

*Lal.* Hist! hush! within the gloom  
Of yonder trees methought a figure passed—  
A spectral figure, solemn, and slow, and noiseless—  
Like the grim shadow Conscience, solemn and noiseless.  
(*Walks across and returns.*)

I was mistaken—'twas but a giant bough

Stirred by the autumn wind. Politian!

*Pol.* My Lalage—my love! why art thou moved?  
Why dost thou turn so pale? Not Conscience' self,  
Far less a shadow which thou likenest to it,  
Should shake the firm spirit thus. But the night wind  
Is chilly—and these melancholy boughs  
Throw over all things a gloom.

*Lal.* Politian!  
Thou speakest to me of love. Knowest thou the land  
With which all tongues are busy—a land new found—  
Miraculously found by one of Genoa—  
A thousand leagues within the golden west?  
A fairy land of flowers, and fruit, and sunshine,—  
And crystal lakes, and overarching forests,  
And mountains, around whose towering summits the  
winds

Of Heaven untrammelled flow—which air to breathe  
Is Happiness now, and will be Freedom hereafter  
In days that are to come?

*Pol.* Oh, wilt thou—wilt thou  
Fly to that Paradise—my Lalage, wilt thou  
Fly thither with me? There Care shall be forgotten,  
And Sorrow shall be no more, and Eros be all.  
And life shall then be mine, for I will live  
For thee, and in thine eyes—and thou shalt be  
No more a mourner—but the radiant Joys  
Shall wait upon thee, and the angel Hope  
Attend thee ever; and I will kneel to thee  
And worship thee, and call thee my beloved,  
My own, my beautiful, my love, my wife,  
My all;—oh, wilt thou—wilt thou, Lalage,  
Fly thither with me?

*Lal.* A deed is to be done—  
Castiglione lives!

*Pol.* And he shall die! (*Exit.*)

*Lal.* (*after a pause*). And—he—shall—die!—  
alas!

Castiglione die? Who spoke the words?  
Where am I?—what was it he said?—Politian!  
Thou *art* not gone—thou art not *gone*, Politian!  
I *feel* thou art not gone—yet dare not look,  
Lest I behold thee not—thou *couldst* not go  
With those words upon thy lips—Oh, speak to me!  
And let me hear thy voice—one word—one word,  
To say thou art not gone,—one little sentence,  
To say how thou dost scorn—how thou dost hate  
My womanly weakness. Ha! ha! thou *art* not gone—  
Oh, speak to me! I *knew* thou wouldst not go!  
I knew thou wouldst not, couldst not, *durst* not go.  
Villain, thou *art* not gone—thou mockest me!

And thus I clutch thee—thus!—He is gone, he is gone—

Gone—gone. Where am I?—'tis well—'tis very well!  
So that the blade be keen—the blow be sure,  
'Tis well, 'tis *very* well—alas! alas!

## V.

The Suburbs. POLITIAN alone.

*Politian.* This weakness grows upon me. I am faint,

And much I fear me ill—it will not do  
To die ere I have lived!—Stay—stay thy hand,  
O Azrael, yet awhile!—Prince of the Powers  
Of Darkness and the Tomb, oh, pity me!  
Oh, pity me! let me not perish now,  
In the budding of my Paradisal Hope!  
Give me to live yet—yet a little while:  
'Tis I who pray for life—I who so late  
Demanded but to die!—what sayeth the Count?

*Enter BALDAZZAR.*

*Baldazzar.* That, knowing no cause of quarrel or of feud

Between the Earl Politian and himself,  
He doth decline your cartel.

*Pol.* What didst thou say?

What answer was it you brought me, good Baldazzar?  
With what excessive fragrance the zephyr comes  
Laden from yonder bowers!—a fairer day,  
Or one more worthy Italy, methinks  
No mortal eyes have seen!—*what* said the Count?

*Bal.* That he, Castiglione, not being aware  
Of any feud existing, or any cause  
Of quarrel between your lordship and himself,  
Cannot accept the challenge.

*Pol.* It is most true—  
All this is very true. When saw you, sir,  
When saw you now, Baldazzar, in the frigid  
Ungenial Britain which we left so lately,  
A heaven so calm as this—so utterly free  
From the evil taint of clouds?—and he did *say*?

*Bal.* No more, my lord, than I have told you ;  
The Count Castiglione will not fight,  
Having no cause for quarrel.

*Pol.* Now this is true—  
All very true. Thou art my friend, Baldazzar,  
And I have not forgotten it—thou'lt do me  
A piece of service ; wilt thou go back and say  
Unto this man, that I, the Earl of Leicester,  
Hold him a villain?—thus much, I prythee, say  
Unto the Count—it is exceeding just  
He should have cause for quarrel.

*Bal.* My lord !—my friend !—

*Pol.* (*aside*). 'Tis he—he comes himself ! (*Aloud.*)  
Thou reasonest well.

I know what thou wouldst say—not send the mes-  
sage—

Well !—I will think of it—I will not send it.  
Now prythee, leave me—hither doth come a person  
With whom affairs of a most private nature  
I would adjust.

*Bal.* I go—to-morrow we meet,  
Do we not?—at the Vatican.

*Pol.* At the Vatican. (*Exit BAL.*)

*Enter CASTIGLIONE.*

*Cas.* The Earl of Leicester here !

*Pol.* I *am* the Earl of Leicester, and thou seest,  
Dost thou not, that I am here ?

*Cas.* My lord, some strange,  
Some singular mistake—misunderstanding—  
Hath without doubt arisen : thou hast been urged  
Thereby, in heat of anger, to address  
Some words most unaccountable, in writing,  
To me, Castiglione ; the bearer being  
Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. I am aware  
Of nothing which might warrant thee in this  
thing,  
Having given thee no offence. Ha !—am I right ?  
'Twas a mistake ?—undoubtedly—we all  
Do err at times.

*Pol.* Draw, villain, and prate no more !

*Cas.* Ha !—draw ?—and villain ? have at thee then  
at once,  
Proud Earl ! (*Draws.*)

*Pol.* (*drawing*). Thus to the expiatory tomb,  
Untimely sepulchre, I do devote thee  
In the name of Lalage !

*Cas.* (*letting fall his sword and recoiling to the ex-  
tremity of the stage*).  
Of Lalage !

Hold off—thy sacred hand !—avaunt, I say !  
Avaunt—I will not fight thee—indeed I dare not.

*Pol.* Thou wilt not fight with me, didst say, Sir  
Count ?  
Shall I be baffled thus ?—now this is well ;  
Didst say thou *darest* not ? Ha !

*Cas.* I dare not—dare not—  
Hold off thy hand—with that beloved name  
So fresh upon thy lips I will not fight thee—  
I cannot—dare not.

*Pol.* Now by my halidom  
I do believe thee!—coward, I do believe thee!

*Cas.* Ha!—coward!—this may not be!

*(Clutches his sword and staggers towards Politian, but his purpose is changed before reaching him, and he falls upon his knee at the feet of the Earl.)*

Alas! my lord,  
It is—it is—most true. In such a cause  
I am the veriest coward. Oh, pity me!

*Pol.* *(greatly softened).* Alas!—I do—indeed I  
pity thee.

*Cas.* And Lalage—

*Pol.* Scoundrel!—arise and die!

*Cas.* It needeth not be—thus—thus—Oh, let me  
die

Thus on my bended knee. It were most fitting  
That in this deep humiliation I perish.  
For in the fight I will not raise a hand  
Against thee, Earl of Leicester. Strike thou home—  
*(Baring his bosom.)*

Here is no let or hindrance to thy weapon—  
Strike home. I *will* not fight thee.

*Pol.* Now's Death and Hell!  
Am I not—am I not sorely—grievously tempted  
To take thee at thy word? But mark me, sir:  
Think not to fly me thus. Do thou prepare  
For public insult in the streets—before  
The eyes of the citizens. I'll follow thee—  
Like an avenging spirit I'll follow thee

Even unto death. Before those whom thou lovest—  
Before all Rome I'll taunt thee, villain,—I'll taunt  
thee,

Dost hear? with *cowardice*—thou *wilt not* fight me?  
Thou liest! thou *shalt*! (Exit.)

*Cas.* Now this indeed is just!  
Most righteous and most just, avenging Heaven!









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